



13-2027

To the READER.

Christian Reader,

Chrift may be said to be Crucified three ways; by the Jews actually, in the Sacrament Declaratively, and by Unbelievers at his Table Interpretatively. Amongst the Blood guiltiness is reckoned one of the most heinous; and of all Blood guiltiness, to be guilty of the Blood of Christ, is a sin of the deepest guilt, and will be avenged with the most dreadful punishment, 1 Cor. 11. 27, 29. If vengeance be taken sevenfold on him that slew Cain, what vengeance shall be taken on him that Crucifies afresh the Lord of glory?

The heaviest blow of Divine Justice is still ready to avenge the abuse of the best mercy. What can the heart of man conceive more solemn, more sacred, or more deeply affecting, than the representation of the greatest love of the Father, and the most grievous passions of the Son? What sin can be more provoking to God, than the slight and contempt of these most awful mysteries? and what pun-

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nishment can be more terrible, than for such a wretched soul to eat and drink Damnation to it self? Melancthon records a very dreadful example of Gods righteous Judgment upon a company of prophane wretches, who in a Tragedy intended to act the death of Christ upon the Cross. He that acted the Souldiers part, instead of piercing with his Spear a bladder full of blood hid under the garment, wounded him to death that was upon the Cross; who falling down, killed him, who (in a disguise) acted the part of the woman that stood wailing under the Cross. His Brother, who was first slain, slew the murderer, who acted the Souldiers part; and for slaying him, was himself hanged by order of Justice. Thus did the vengeance of God speedily overtake them, and hang'd them up in Chains, for a warning to all that should ever dare to dally with the great and jealous God.

These are terrible strokes, and yet not so terrible as those which are more ordinarily, but less sensibly inflicted upon the inner man for the abuse of this Ordinance.

To prevent these Judgments, and obtain
those

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those Blessings which come through this Ordinance, great regard must be had to two things, viz 1. The Inbeing. 2. The Activity of true Grace.

1. *Examine thy self, Reader, whether there be any gracious principle planted in thy soul, whereby thou art alive indeed unto God. It was an antient abuse of the Sacrament (condemned and cast out by the* Carthaginian Council) *to give it unto dead men. Dead souls can have no Communion with the living God; no more benefit from this Table, than the Emperors Guests had from his Table, where Loaves of Gold were set before them to eat. There is more than a shew of grace in the Sacrament; it hath not only the visible sign, but the spiritual grace also which it represents. See that there be more than a shew & visible sign of grace also in thy soul, when thou comest nigh to the Lord in that Ordinance. See to the exercise and activity, as well as to the truth and sincerity of thy grace. Even a Believer himself doth*

Concil. Carthag.
Can. 6. Placuit ut
defunctorum corpo-
ribus non detur
Eucharistia, &c.

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not eat and drink worthily, unless the grace that is in him be excited and exercised at this Ordinance. It is not Faith inhering, but Faith realizing, applying and powerfully working. It is not a disposition to humiliation for sin, but the actual thawing and melting of the heart for sin, whilst thou lookest on him whom thou hast pierced, and mournest for him, as one that mourneth for his only Son, for his First-born. Nor is it a disposition or principle of love to Christ that is only required, but the stirring up of that fire of love, the exciting of it into a vehement flame.

I know the excitations and exercises of grace are attended with great difficulties. They are not things within our command, and at our beck. O! 'tis hard, 'tis hard indeed, Reader, even after God hath taken the heart of stone out of thee, and given thee an heart of flesh, to mourn actually for sin, even when so great an occasion and call is given thee to that work at the Lords Table; for the same power is requisite to excite the act that was required to plant the habit. Gratia gratiam postulat.

However, the duty is thine, though the

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power be Gods; why else are his people blamed, because they stirred not up themselves to take bold of him? Isa. 64-7.

To assist thee in this work, some help is offered in the following Meditations. 'Tis true it is not the reading of the best Meditations another can prepare for thee, that will alter the temper of thy heart, except the Spirit of God concur with these truths, and bless them to thy soul: But yet these helps must not be slighted, because they are not self-sufficient. Man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; yet it were a fond vanity and sin for any man upon that ground, to cast away bread, and expect to live by a miracle without it. We must lift up our hearts to God for a blessing, and then eat; do the same here, first pray, then read, and the Lord quicken thee by it for duty. There are two things of special concernment to the Reader, when thou art to address thy self to any solemn duty, especially such as this.

1. Prepare for thy duty diligently.
2. Rely not upon thy preparations.

1. Prepare

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1. Prepare with all diligence for thy duty ; take pains with thy dull heart ; cleanse thy polluted heart ; compose thy vain heart ; remember how great a presence thou art ap-

proaching. If Augustus thus re-
Non puta- proved one that entertained him
bam me tibi without suitable preparation, say-
tam fami- ing, I did not think we had
liarem. been so familiar ; much more may thy God

reprove thee for thy careless neglect of due preparation for him.

2. But yet take heed on the other side, that thou rely not upon thy best preparations. It is an ingenious and true note of Luther, speaking to this very point of preparation for the Sacrament ;

Tunc pessime Never are men more unfit, than
dispositus quan- when they think themselves most
do aptissime. fit, and best prepared for their duty ;
never more fit, than when most
humbled and ashamed in a sense of their own unfitness.

That the blessing of God, and the breathings of his good Spirit, may accompany these poor labours to thy soul, is the hearts desire of

Thy Servant in Christ,

John Flavell.

Sacramental Meditations on the following select places of Scripture.

Medit. upon *Psal.* 89. 7. God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of his Saints, and to be had in reverence of all that are about him.

II Medit. upon *Jer.* 12. 2. Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins.

III Medit. upon *Rom.* 7. 21. I find then a Law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.

IV Medit. upon *Ephes.* 1. 13. In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of Promise.

V Medit. upon *John* 1. 29. Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.

VI Medit. upon *Rom.* 8. 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

VII Medit. upon *Mark* 9. 24. And straightway the Father of the Child cried,

and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.

VIII Medit. upon Psal. 40. 8. I delight to do thy will O my God; yea thy Law is within my heart.

IX Medit. upon Zech. 22. 10. part. And they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only Son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born.

X Medit. upon John 6. 55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

XI Medit. upon Canticles 8. 6. Set me as a Seal upon thy heart, as a Seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.

XII Medit. upon Ephes. 3. 19. And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.

The First Meditation.

UPON

Pfal. 89. 7. God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of his Saints, and to be had in reverence of all that are about him.

THERE are special Seasons wherein the Saints approach near unto God in this Life, and wherein the Lord comes near unto them.

It pleaseth the Majesty of Heaven sometimes to admit poor worms of the Earth to such sensible and sweet perceptions of himself, as are found above all expressions, and seems to be a transient glance upon that glory, which glorified eyes more steadily behold above, *Believing,*
we rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, or glorified joy; as it is,
1 Pet. 1. 8. And yet how sweet and excellent fo-

Ἀγαλλιάσθε χαρᾷ ἀνεκκαλήτῳ καὶ δόξασμῳ Inenarrabili & glorificatione. *Montan.*

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soever these foretastes of Heaven are, Heaven itself will be an unspeakable surprize to the Saints, when they shall come thither.

Now among all those Ordinances, wherein the blessed God manifests himself to the Children of Men, none are found to set forth more of the joy of his presence, than that of the *Lords Supper* : At that blessed Table are such sensible embraces betwixt Christ and Believers, as do afford a delight and solace beyond the joy of the whole Earth.

And where such special manifestations of God are, suitable dispositions and preparations should be found on our part to meet the Lord.

And certainly we shall find reason enough for it, if we will consider the importance of this Scripture before us, *God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of his Saints, and to be had in reverence of all that are round about him* : Wherein we have, 1. The Object. 2. The Subject. 3. The Mode of Divine Worship.

First, The Object of Worship, God;
God

God is to feared: In all Divine Worship Men and Angels have to do with God. *All things* (saith the Apostle) *are open and naked to the eyes of him with whom we have to do, Heb. 4. 13. with whom we have speech or business.* So it may be sensed, when we worship, we draw nigh to God, and that about the greatest concerns and weightiest business in the world.

Secondly, The *Subject*, or the persons that approach unto God in his worship, *his Saints, and all that are about him.* By *Saints*, many *Interpreters* do in this place understand the *Angels*, called *Saints* from the purity and holiness of their nature; and so make the next clause exegetical of this. Those that before were call'd *Saints* in respect of their *Nature*, are in the next words said to be such as are round about him; *his Satellites*, Attendants, or those that stand as Servants about him, to do his pleasure, where they are described by their *Office*; and both these seem to be grounded upon the precedent Verses. *Who in the Heaven can be compared to the Lord? Who among*

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the Sons of the Mighty (or of God, so the Angels are call'd, *Job* 1. 6.) *can be likened to the Lord?* And though it be true, that the *Angels* worship and serve the Lord with greatest reverence and dread (for these are *his nigh Ones*, or such as are round about him) yet there is no necessity to limit this Scripture so narrowly, by excluding the people of God on Earth; they also are his Saints, and more frequently so stiled, tho' they be Saints of a lower Class and Order; and they also are round about him as well as the *Angels*, and when they worship him, he is in the midst of them, *Mat.* 18. 20. and the place where they Assemble to worship, is call'd the place of his Feet, *Isa.* 60. 13. But if we find not the Saints on Earth in the direct and immediate sense of this Text, yet we must needs meet them in the rebound and consequence: For if creatures so much above us as the Angels, do perform their Service, and pay their Homage to the highest Majesty with so much fear and reverence, shall not inferiour creatures, the poor Worms of
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the Earth, tremble at his presence? And this brings us to the third thing.

Namely, 3. The *Mode*, or manner in which the Worship of God is to be performed, viz. with great fear and reverence. *God is greatly to be feared.* *Piscator* translates it, *Veheementer formidandus*, to be vehemently feared; and opposes it to that formal, careless, trifling, vain spirit, which too often is found in those that approach the Lord in the duties of his Worship. The Observation from hence will be this.

Obs. *That the greatest composedness and seriousness of spirit is due to God, from all those that draw nigh unto him in his Worship.*

And this is no more than what the Lord expressly requires at our hands, *Lev. 10 3. I will be sanctified in them that come nigh unto me: So Heb. 12. 28. Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire.*

And as this disposition and temper of Spirit is due to every act and part of Gods

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Worship ; so (to accommodate this general to our particular occasion) it is especially due to this great and solemn Ordinance of the Lords Supper.

It is the observation of the *Casuists*, that *Sacramentum & mortis articulus equiparantur* ; The Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and the very point of death require equal seriousness : a mans spirit should be as deeply solemn and composed at the *Lords Table*, as upon a Death-bed : We should go to that Ordinance, as if we were then going into another world.

The Primitive Christians used to sit up whole nights in Meditation and Prayer, before their participation of the Lords Supper ; and these nights were call'd *Vigiliae*, their Watches. Such was the Reverence the Saints had for this Ordinance (which they usually call'd *mysterium tremendum*, a tremendous mystery) that they would not give sleep to their eyes, or slumber to their eye-lids, when so great and solemn a day drew near, *Chrysost. lib. 3. de Sacerdot.*

And

And that all this solemn preparation is no more than needs, will convincingly appear to us upon the following grounds and reasons.

Reason 1. From the *solemn nature* and ends of this Ordinance; for what is the express design and use of it, but a lively representation of the Lords death, 1 Cor. 11. 26. *As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lords death till he come.* Jesus Christ is therein set forth Crucified before us, and not to make a bare representation of it to us, as a thing wherein we have no personal interest or concernment, but to represent his *death lively*, and seal our title to it *firmly*; *This is my body which is broken for you*, verse 24.

Now, which of these is to be attended with a dead, careless, and slight spirit? Is't the representation of Christs death? God forbid. O! if there be any subject of Meditation in the world able to drink up the very spirits of a man, this is it.

The Sun fainted, the Heavens mourn'd
In black; the very Rocks rent in pieces
when

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when this *Tragedy* was acted ; and shall our hearts be more senseless and obdurate than they at the representation of it ? But loe, here is more than a representation ; Christ is set forth in this Ordinance as *Crucified for you*, as suffering and enduring all this in your room and stead : Now,

Suppose, Reader, thy self to be justly condemned to the torture of the *Rack*, or *Strappado* ; and that thy Father, Brother, or dearest Friend preferring thy life to his own, would become thy *Ἀντίποινος*, *Ransom*, by undergoing the torment for thee ; and all that is left for thee to suffer, were only by way of sympathy with him ? Suppose now thy self standing by that Engine of Torture, and beholding the members of thy dear Friend distorted, and all out of joynt, hearing the doleful groans extorted by the extremity of anguish ; and under all these torments, still maintaining a constant love to thee, not once repenting his torments for thee ; couldst thou stand there with dry eyes ? could thy heart be unaffected and stupid at such a sight ? Write him

him rather a Beast, a Stone, than a Man, that could do so.

But this is not all : The Believers interest in Christ is *Sealed*, as well as the sufferings of Christ represented in this Ordinance.

And is a Sealed Interest in Christ so cheap or common a thing, as that it should not engage, yea, swallow up all the powers of thy soul? O what is this ! what is this !

The Seal of God set to the Soul of a poor Sinner, to confirm and ratifie its title to the Person of Christ, and the inestimable Treasures of his Blood ! Surely as the sealing up of a man to Damnation, is the sum of all misery, and that poor creature that is so sealed, hath cause enough to mourn and wail to Eternity : So the sealing up of a Soul to Salvation, is the sum of all mercy and happiness ; and the Soul that is so sealed, hath cause enough to lie at the feet of God, overwhelmed with the sense of so invaluable a mercy.

Reas. 2. As the nature and ends of the Ordinance call for the greatest composedness of spirit ; so the danger of unworthy receiving

receiving should work our hearts to the most serious frames: For if a man be here without his Wedding-garment, if he eat and drink unworthily, it is at the greatest peril of his Soul that he doth so, 1 Cor. 11. v. 27. *Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.*

To prophane and undervalue that Body and Blood of the Lord, is a sin above measure sinful, and the punishments of such sins will be most dreadful; for still, the more excellent the Blessings are that come by any Ordinance, the more dreadful the Curses are that avenge the abuse of such mercies. How soon may a man draw fearful guilt upon his soul, and dreadful Judgments upon his body, by an heedless management of such sacred mysteries! *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep,* verse 30.

Mr. Tho. Goodwins
Epistle to Mr. Fen-
ners Sermon.

It is a most weighty Note that a worthy Pen sets upon this Scripture; they discerned

discerned not the Body of his Son Jesus Christ in his Ordinances ; but instead of that holy, reverend, and deep-dyed behaviour which was due to it, both from their inner and outward man, as being a creature of the highest and deepest Sanctification that ever God sanctified ; sanctified not only to a more excellent and glorious condition, but also to many ends and purposes, of far higher and dearer concernment, both for the glory of God, and benefit of men themselves, than all other creatures whatsoever, whether in Heaven or Earth : they handled and dealt by it in both kinds, as if it had been a common or un sanctified thing : Thus they discerned not the Lords Body.

And as they discerned not his Body, so neither did God (in some sense) discern theirs ; but in those sore Strokes and heavy, Judgments which he inflicted on them, had them in no other regard or consideration, than as if they had been the bodies of his Enemies, the bodies of wicked and sinful men. Thus drawing the model and platform

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form of their punishment (as usually he doth) from the structure and proportion of their sin.

Thus the Just and Righteous God builds up the breaches that we make upon the honour belonging to the body of his Son, with the ruins of that honour which he had given unto ours, in health, strength, life, and many other outward comforts and supports.

O then what need is there of a most awful and composed spirit, when we approach the Lord in this Ordinance !

Reas. 3. As the danger of unworthy receiving should compose us to the greatest seriousness ; so the remembrance of that frame and temper Christs Spirit was in, when he actually suffered those things for us, should compose our spirits into a frame more suitable and agreeable to his ; when we see his death, as it were, acted over again before our eyes, was his heart roving and wandering in that day ? Did he not sense and mind the work he was going about ? Was his heart like thine, stupid and
unaffected

unaffected with these things? Look but upon that Text, *Luke 22. 44.* and you shall see whether it were so or no. It's said (when this *Tragedy* drew nigh, and his Enemies were ready to seize him in the Garden) *That being in an Agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground:* And *Mat. 26. 38.* he saith, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* His soul was full of sorrow, and is thine full of stupidity? God forbid.

If thy heart be cold, Christ's was hot: If thou canst not shed a tear, he poured out clods of blood from every part. Oh! how unsuitable is a dry eye, and an hard heart to such an Ordinance as this!

Reas. 4. As the frame Christ's Spirit was in, at his death, should command the most solemn frame upon our spirits, at the recognizing of it; so the things here represented, require and call for the highest exercise of every grace of the Spirit in our souls; for we come not thither as idle *Spectators*, but as active *Instruments* to glorifie

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God

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God by exercising every grace upon Christ, as Crucified for us. Behold here are among the rest, 1. The proper object of Faith. 2. The flowing spring of Repentance. 3. The powerful attractive of Love.

First, *The proper object of Faith* is here. This Ordinance, as a glass, represents to thine eye that glorious Person, of whom the Father said, *This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, Mat. 17. 5. Of whom he said, *I have laid help upon one that is mighty*. This was he that *was made sin for us, who had no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. Who trod the Wine-press alone, and is here to be seen in his red Garments: Every drop of his precious Blood hath a tongue calling for Faith to behold it, poured forth as a Sacrifice to God for sin. *This* (saith he) *is the Cup of the New Testament in my Blood, which was shed for many, for the remission of sins*.

And what footing could thy Faith find for Pardon and Salvation any where else? 'Tis Christ Crucified that Faith clasps as
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the last and only hope and refuge of a poor Sinner. Here all Believers drop Anchor: This is that blessed object on whom they take the dead gripe, or last grasp, when their eye-strings and heart-strings are breaking. When you see the Blood of Christ flowing forth, how can Faith be silent in thy soul? When he bids thee, as it were, to put thy finger into his side, shews thee his hands and his feet there, it will cry out in thy soul, My Lord, and my God.

Secondly, The flowing spring of Repentance is here, if there be any fire that can melt, or hammer that can break a hard heart, here it is, *Zech. 12. 10. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn.* Nothing lays a gracious soul lower in it self, than to see how low Christ was laid in his Humiliation for it.

Here the evil of sin is also represented in the clearest glass that ever the eye of man saw in it. The sufferings of the Son of God discover the evil of sin more than the everlasting torments of the damned can do. So that if there be but one drop of

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spiritual sorrow in the heart of a Christian, here, me-thinks, it should be seen dropping from the eye of Faith.

Thirdly, The most *attractive* object of love is here: Put all created Beauties, Excellencies and Perfections together, and what are they but blackness and deformity compared with lovely Jesus? *My Beloved* (saith the enamour'd Spouse) *is white and ruddy, Cant. 5. 10.* Behold him at the Table in his perfect Innocency, and unparallel'd Sufferings. This is he *who was rich, but for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich, 2 Cor. 8. 9.* This is he that parted with his honour first, and his life next; yea, he parted with his honour in his Incarnation, that he might be capable to part with his life for our Redemption.

Behold here the degrees of his Sufferings, and by them measure the degrees of his Love. Behold in his death, as in the Deluge all the Fountains beneath, and the Windows of Heaven above opened; the Wrath of God, the cruelty of Men, the
fury

fury of Hell breaking in together upon him, and his soul surrounded with sorrow : And how can this be represented, and thy soul not astonished at this amazing matchless love of Christ ? Surely one flame doth not more naturally produce another, than the love of Christ thus represented to a gracious soul, doth produce love to Christ, and that in the most intense degree.

Use 1. How naturally doth this Doctrine shame and humble the best hearts for their sinful discomposures, vanity and deadness ; for the roving and wanderings of their hearts, even when they come near the Lord in such a solemn Ordinance as this is ?

The holiest man upon Earth may lay his hand upon his breast, & say, Lord, How unsuitable is this heart of mine, to such an object of Faith as is here presented to me ? Doth such a temper of spirit suit thine awful presence ? Should the represented Agonies and Sufferings of Christ for me, be beheld with a spirit no more concerned, pierced and wounded for sin ? O how can I look upon him whom I have pierced, and

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not mourn, and be in bitterness for him, as for an only Son, a First-born ! O the stupefying and benumbing power of sin ! O the efficacy of Unbelief !

It was charged upon the *Israelites*, as the great aggravation of their sin, that they *provoked God at the Sea, even at the red Sea, Psal. 106. 7.* the place where their miraculous Salvation was wrought. But Lord Jesus, my hard heart provokes thee in an higher degree, even at the red Sea of thy precious invaluable Blood, by which my eternal Salvation was wrought. O my God, what a heart have I ! Did the Blood of Christ run out so freely and abundantly for me, and cannot I shed one tear for my sins that pierced him ? O let me never be friends with my own heart, till it love Christ better, and hate sin more !

Use 2. This Scripture hath also an awakèning voice to all that come nigh to God in any of his Ordinances, especially in this Ordinance. O Christians ! bethink yourselves where you are, & what you are doing : Know you not that the King comes in to
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see the Guests? Yea, you do know that God is in this place? an awful Majesty beholds you. *All the Churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the heart and the reins, and will give to every one as his work shall be, Rev. 2. 23.*

Thy business, Christian, is not with Men, but with God, and the solemnest business that ever thy thoughts were conversant about. Thou art here to recognize the sufferings of thy Redeemer, to take the seals and pledges of thy Salvation from the hand of his Spirit; imagine the same thing which is now to be done spiritually, and by the ministry of Faith, were but to be performed visibly and audibly by the ministry of thy senses.

Suppose Jesus Christ did personally shew himself at this Table, and were pleas'd to make himself known in breaking of Bread, as once he did to the Disciples. Suppose thou sawest him appear at this Table, as he now doth appear in Heaven, *as a Lamb that had been slain*: Imagine thou heardest him say, Believer, this precious Blood of

mine was shed for thee ; there be millions of Men and Women in the world naturally as good as thee, that shall have no interest in it, or benefit by it : But for thee it was shed, and for the remission of thy sins ; my Blood was the only thing in the world that was equal to the demerit of thy sins, and it hath made full satisfaction to God for them all : Thy sins which are many, are therefore forgiven thee ; my Blood hath purchased the eternal Inheritance of glory for thee ; and this day I am come to deliver the seals and pledges thereof into thine hand. Take then the seals of eternal Salvation this day : Take thine own Christ with all that he is and hath, in thine arms : Whatever I have suffered, done, or procured for any of my Saints, I have suffered, done, and procured the same for thee. Why, all this is here to be done as really and truly, though in a more spiritual way, at this Table ; and shall not such business as this is fully fix and engage thy heart ? What then shall do it ?

Awake Faith ; awake Repentance ; awake
Love ;

Love; yea, let all the powers of my soul be thoroughly awakened this day, to attend the Lord.

The Second Meditation.

U P O N

Jeremy 12. 2. *Thou art near in their mouths, and far from their reins.*

THIS Scripture gives us the Character and description of an *Hypocrite*; and he is here described two ways; viz. 1. By what he hath. 2. By what he hath not.

First: The Hypocrite is described by what he hath; he hath God in his mouth: *Thou art near in their mouth*: (i. e.) they profess with a full mouth, that they are thy People, saith *Piscator*; or they speak much about the Law (as another senses it) God, and his Temple, Religion with its rites are much talked of among them, they have him

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him in their prayers and duties ; and this is all that the Hypocrite hath of God. Religion only sanctifies his tongue that seems to be dedicated to God, but it penetrates no farther ; and therefore,

Secondly : He is described by that he hath nor, or by what he wants ; *And, or but thou art far from their reins,* (i. e.) they feel not the powers and influences of that name which they so often invoke and talk of, going down to their very reins, and affecting their very hearts ; so we must understand this Metaphorical expression here, as the opposition directs. For the reins having so great and sensible a sympathy with the heart, which is the seat of affections and passions, upon that account it is usual in Scripture, to put the reins for those intimate and secret affections, thoughts, and passions of the heart, with which they have so near cognation, and so sensible a sympathy. When the heart is under great consternation, the loins or reins are seiz'd also, as *Dan. 5. 6.* Then that *Kings Countenance was changed,*
and

and his thoughts troubled him, and the joynts of his loins were loosed. On the contrary, when the heart is fill'd with delight and gladness, the reins are said to reioyce. *Prov.* 23. 16. *Yea, my reins shall reioyce when thy lips speak right things, totus lætitiâ diffiliam.* I shall even leap for joy. So then, when the Prophet saith, God is far from the reins of the Hypocrite, the meaning is, he feels not the heart-affecting influence and power of Religion upon his heart and affections, as Gods People do. And hence the Note will be;

Doct. That God comes nearer to the hearts and reins of his People in their duties, than he doth to any Hypocritical, or formal Professor.

By Gods nearness, we understand not his Omnipresence, that neither comes nor goes; nor his love to his People, that abides, but the sensible sweet manifestations and out-lets of it to their souls. So in *Psal.* 145. 18. *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, unto all that call upon him in truth.*

Note

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Note the restriction and limitation of this glorious privilege; 'tis the peculiar enjoyment of sincere, and upright-hearted Worshipers. Others may have Communion with duties, but not with God in them.

But that God comes nigh, very nigh to upright hearts in their duties, is a truth as sensibly manifest to spiritual persons, as that they are nigh the fire, when they feel the comfortable heat of it refreshing them in a cold season, when they are almost starved and benumbed with cold. Three things make this evident.

First: Sincere souls are sensible of Gods *accesses* to them in their duties; they feel his approaches to their Spirits. *Lam. 3. 57. Thou drewest near in the day: that I called upon thee; thou saidst, Fear not.* And what a surprize was that to the Church? *Cant. 2. 8. It is the Voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh, &c.* Certainly there is a felt presence of God, which no words can make another to understand; they feel the Fountain flowing abundantly into the dry
pits,

pits, the heart fills apace, the empty thoughts swell with a fulness of spiritual things which strive for vent.

Secondly : They are sensible of Gods recesses, and withdrawments from their spirits, they feel how the ebb follows the flood, and how the waters abate. So you find it in *Cant. 5. 6. I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone, my soul failed when he spake : I sought him, but I could not find him ; I called, but he gave me no answer.* The Hebrew is very Pathetical, *He was gone, he was gone.* A sad change of the frame of her heart quickly followed.

Thirdly : The Lords nearness to the hearts and reins of his People in their duties, is evident to them from the effects that it leaves upon their spirits. For look as it is with the Earth and Plants, with respect to the approach or remove of the Sun in the Spring and Autumn : So it is here as Christ speaks, *Luke 21. 29. When ye see the Figg-tree and all the Trees shoot forth, we know that Summer is nigh at hand.* An

D

approach-

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approaching Sun renews the face of the Earth, and makes Nature smile. The Trees bud and blossom, the Fishes rise, the Birds sing, it's a kind of Resurrection to Nature from the dead. So is it when the Lord comes near the hearts and reins of men in duty : For then they find that,

First, A real taste of the joy of the Lord is here given to men, the fulness whereof is in Heaven ; hence call'd

Dr. Preston, when dying said, I shall change my place, not my company.

2 Cor. 1. 22. *The earnest of his Spirit :* And 1 Pet. 1. 8. *Glorified Joy ;* or a short Salvation, O, what is this ? What is this ? Certainly it is something that hath no Affinity with flesh, or gross corporeal pleasures ; but is of another nature, something which transcends all that ever was felt or tasted in this world, since we were first conversant among sensible objects.

Secondly : A mighty strength and power coming into their souls, and actuating all its faculties and graces. When God comes near, new powers enter the soul ;

soul; the feeble is as *David*, Psal. 138. 3. *In the day that I cried, Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.* Cant. 1. 12. *Whilst the King sitteth at his Table, my Spikenard, &c.* Hope was low, and Faith was weak, little strength in any grace, except desires; but when the Lord comes, strength comes with him. Then as it is *Neb.* 8. 10. *The joy of the Lord is your strength.* O the vigorous sallies of the heart to God! *Psal* 63. 8. *O the strength of Love,* Cant. 8. 6. Duties are other manner of things than they were wont to be. *Did not our hearts burn within us?* Luk. 24. 32.

Thirdly: A remarkable transformation and change of spirit follows it.

These things are found to be marvelously assimilating. The sights of God, the felt presence of God, is as fire which quickly assimilates what is put into it, to its own likeness. So *2 Cor.* 3. 18. They are said to be *changed from glory to glory.* It always leaves the mind more refined and abstracted from gross material things, and

changed into the same Image. They have a similitude of God upon them, who have God near unto their hearts and reins.

Fourthly: A vigorous working of the heart Heaven-ward: A mounting of the soul upwards. Now the soul shews that it hath not forgot its way home again. It is with such a Soul as sensibly embraces Christ in the arms of Faith, as it was with Simeon, when he took him bodily into his Arm. Now (saith he) *let thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy Salvation.* O! it would have the wings of a Dove to flie away from this polluted world, this unquiet world, and be at rest.

1. *Infer. Then certainly there is an Heaven and a state of glory for the Saints.* Heaven is no dream or night Vision. It is sensibly tasted and felt by thousands of Witnesses in this world; they are sure it is no mistake. God is with them of a truth, in the way of their duties. They do not only read of a glorified eye, but they have something of it, or like it in this world. *The pure*

pure in heart do here see God. Mat. 5. 8.

The Saints have not only a Witness without them in the Word, that there is a state of glory prepared for Believers, but they have a witness in themselves. These are not the Testimonies of craz'd brains, but of the wisest and most serious of men; not a few, but a multitude of them; not conjecturally delivered, but upon tast, feeling, and tryal. O, blessed be God for such sensible Confirmations, such sweet prælibations.

2. *Infer.* But, O, What is Heaven! and what that state of glory reserved for the Saints! Doth a glimpse of Gods presence in a duty, go down to the heart and reins? O, how unutterable then must that be which is seen and felt above, where God comes as near to men as can be? *Rev. 22.*

3, 4. *The Throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his Servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face. And 1 Thes. 4. 17. And so shall we be ever with the Lord. O, what is that! Ever with the Lord? Christians, what you feel and taste*

here by Faith, is part of Heavens glory ; but yet Heaven will be an unspeakable surprisal to you, when you come thither for all that : *It doth not yet appear what we shall be,* 1 John 3. 1, 2:

3. *Infer.* See hence the necessity of casting these very bodies into a new mold by their Resurrection from the dead, according to that, 1 Cor. 15. 41. *It is sown in weakness, but raised in power.* How else could it be a Co-partner with the soul in the ineffable joys of that presence above ?

Certainly my Friends, that which is to be a Vessel to contain such strong liquor as this, had need be strongly hooped ; lest it flie to pieces, as old Bottles do when fill'd with new Wine. The state of this Mortality cannot bear the fulness of that joy. Hold, Lord, stay thy hand (said a choice Christian once) thy Creature is but a clay Vessel, and can hold no more. If a transient glimpse of God here, be felt in the very reins ; if it so work upon the very body by sympathy with the soul, O, what vigorous spiritual bodies doth the state of
glory

glory require! And such they shall be,
Phil. 3. 21. Like unto Christs glorious Body.

3. *Infer.* Is God so near to his People above all others in the world? how good is it to be near them that are so near to God? O, it would do a mans heart good to be near that Person who hath lately had God near to his soul. Well might David say, *Psal. 16. 3. All my delight is in the Saints, and in the Excellent of the Earth.* And again, *Psal. 119. 63. I am a Companion of all such as fear thee.* O, this is the beauty of Christian fellowship; this is the glory of that Society; not the communication of their gifts, but the Savour of God on their Spirits. If any thing be alluring in this world, this is, *1 Joh. 1. 3. That ye may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Christ Jesus.* It's said, *Zech. 8. 23. of the Jews, the time shall come when there shall be such a presence of God among that People, that ten men out of all Languages shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew; saying, We will go with you,*

for we have heard that God is with you.

Christians, if there were more of God upon you, and in you, others would not be tempted to leave your Society, and fall in with the Men of the World; they would say, we will go with you, for God is with you.

5. *Infer.* If God be so near to the heart and reins of his People in their duties, O, how assiduous should they be in their duties? *It's good for me to draw nigh to God,* Psal. 73. 28. Good indeed; the World cannot reward the expence of time at this rate, with all its glory, *Jam. 4. 8. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you: Thou meetest him that rejoyceth and worketh Righteousness; those that remember thee in thy ways,* Isa, 64. 5.

Obj. It would be an encouragement indeed, if I might thus meet God in the way of duty, but that's but seldom I can so meet God there, in sensible powerful outlets of his grace and love, I am mostly dead and cold there, I feel not Communion with God going down to my heart and reins.

Sol.

Sol. First, you draw nigh to God; but is it in truth, or in meer formality? God is only high to such as call in truth upon him, *Psal.* 145. 18.

Secondly: If your hearts be sincere, yet are they not sluggish? Do you stir up your selves to take hold of God? many there be that do not, *Isa.* 64. 7. and *Cant.* 5. 3, 5.

Thirdly: Have you not grieved the Spirit of God, and caused him to withdraw from you? O, remember what Pride and Vanity hath been in you after former manifestations, *Eph.* 4. 30.

Fourthly: Nevertheless wait for God in his ways; his coming upon our souls is oftentimes, yea, mostly a surprizal to us, *Cant.* 6. 12. Or ever I was aware, my soul made me as the Chariots of Aminadab.

6. *Infer.* What steddty Christians should all real Christians be? For loe, what a Seal and Witness hath Religion in the breast of every sincere Professor of it? True Christians do not only hear by report, or learn by Books the reality of it, but feel by experience,

perience, and have a sensible proof of it in their very hearts and reins; their reins instruct them, as it is *Psal.* 16. 7. They learn by spiritual sense and feeling, than which nothing can give greater confirmation in the ways of God.

There are two sorts of knowledge among men, one *Traditional*, the other *Experimental*: This last, the *Apostle* calls a *knowing in our selves*, *Heb.* 10. 34. and opposes it to that traditional knowledge which may be said to be without our selves, because borrowed from other men.

Now this experience we have of the powers of Religion in our souls, is that only which fixes a mans spirit in the ways of Godliness. It made the *Hebrews* take joyfully the spoiling of their goods; no arguments or temptations can wrest truth out of the hand of experience, *non est disputandum de gustu*. For want of this many Professors turn aside from Truth in the hour of Trial. O, Brethren, labour to feel the influences of Religion upon your very hearts and reins; this will settle you bet-

ter than all Arguments in the world can do :
By this the ways of God are more endeared
to men, than by any other way in the
world. When your hearts have once felt
it, you will never forsake it.

The Third Meditation.

U P O N

*Rom. 7. 21. I find then a Law, that when
I would do good, evil is present with me.*

THIS Chapter is the very *Anatomy* of a
Christians heart; and gives an ac-
count of the most secret frames and inward
workings of it, both as to Graces and Cor-
ruptions ; and this Verse is a Compendium
of both ; for the words are a mournful
complaint, uttered with a deep sense of an
inward pressure, by reason of Sin ; where-
in we are to consider three things.

1. The person complaining.
2. The matter of complaint.
3. The discovery of that matter.

First : The person complaining I find :

I *Paul*, though I come not behind the chiefest of all the Apostles, though I have been rapt into the third Heaven, and heard things unutterable ; yet I for all that, find in me a *Law*. Never was any meer man more deeply sanctified; Never any lived at an higher rate of Communion with God ; never any did Christ more service in this world ; and yet he found a *Law* of sin in himself.

Secondly : The matter of the complaint which consists in a double evil he groaned under, *viz.* 1. The presence of sin at all times. 2. The operation of sin, especially at some time.

First: The presence of sin at all times. *Evil* (saith he) *is present with me*, it follows me as my shadow doth. By evil we must understand no other evil but sin, the evil of evils ; which in respect of power and efficacy, he also calls a *Law*, because as *Laws* by reason of their annexed rewards and punishments, have a mighty power and efficacy upon the minds of men ; so sin, in-dwelling sin, that root of all our trouble and sorrow ; hath a mighty efficacy upon us.

And

And this is the mournful matter of his complaint: 'Tis not for outward Afflictions, though he had many; nor for what he suffered from the hands of men, though he suffered many grievous things; but 'tis sin dwelling & working in him, that swallows up all other troubles, as Rivers are lost in the Sea; this evil was always with him, the constant residence of sin was in his heart and nature.

Secondly: And what further adds to his burden, as it dwelt in him at all times, so it exerted its efficacy more especially at some times, & those the special times & principal seasons in his whole life: *When*

I would do good (saith he) any spiritual good; and among the rest, when I address my self to any spiritual duty, or Heavenly employment; when I design to draw near to God, and promise my self comfort and redress in Communion with him, then is Evil present. O, if I were but rid of it in those hours, what a mercy should I esteem it, though I were troubled with it

*Cum ad optima
quaque contendo,
experior aliam legem;
tunc maxime insur-
git & precipi-
tur lex carnis.
Tolleretur.*

at other times ! Could I but enjoy my freedom from it in the seasons of duty and times of communion with God, what a comfort would that be ? But then is the special season of its operation. Never is sin more active and busie than at such a time ; and this, O, this is my misery and burden.

Thirdly : The next thing to be heeded here, is the discovery of this evil to him, over which he so mourns and laments. *I find then a Law*, saith he, I find it (*i. e.*) by inward sense, feeling and sad experience. He knew there was such a thing as Original sin in the Natures of men, when he was an Unregenerated *Pharisee*; but though he had then the notion of it, he had not the sense and feeling of it as now he had ; he now feels what before he traditionally understood and talkt of. *I find a Law.* q. d. What or how others find, I know not, I examine not ; some may boast of their gifts, and some may talk more than becomes them of their graces ; they may find excellencies in themselves, and admire them-

themselves too much for them: But for my part, *I find a Law, that when I would do good, evil is present.* I am sure I find a bad heart in the best season, a proud, dead, wandering, hard heart. I find it wofully out of order, God knows, and this is my misery. Hence Note, *

Doct. That the best Christians do sensibly feel, and sadly bewail the workings of their corruptions; and that in the very seasons and opportunities of their communion with God.

Bring thy thoughts, Reader, close to this point, and sadly ponder these three things in it.

First: In what special acts Christians use to feel the working of their corruption in the season of their Communion.

Secondly: Why is it that Corruption stirs and troubles them more at such times, than at others.

Thirdly: Upon what account this is so great a burden to every gracious heart.

First: As to the first of these, namely, the special actings of Corruption in the seasons

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seasons of Communion, they are such as have a natural aptitude and design to destroy all Communion betwixt God and the Soul, *Gal. 5. 17. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.* It's contrary to the spirit, and by reason of that contrariety, a poor Christian cannot do the things that he would.

How many times have some Christians lamented this upon their knees, with bleeding hearts and weeping eyes? Lord, I came hither to enjoy thee; I hop'd for some light, strength, and refreshment in this duty. I promis'd my self a good hour; my heart began to warm and melt in duty; I was nigh to the expectation and desire of my soul; but the unbelief, deadness, and vanity of my heart hath separated betwixt me and my God, and withheld good things from me.

Three things are requisite to Communion with God in duties.

First : Composedness of thoughts.

Secondly : Activity of Faith.

Thirdly : Excitation of affections;
And all these are sensibly obstructed by
innate

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innate Corruption : For by in-dwelling sin,

First : The order of the soul is disturbed by sending forth multitudes of vain and impertinent thoughts to infest and distract the soul in its approaches to God ; the sense of this evil gave occasion to that prayer, *Psal. 86. 11. Unite my heart to fear thy Name.* How much have we to do with our own hearts upon this account every day ? Abundance of rules are given to cure this evil ; but the corruption of the heart makes them all necessary.

Secondly : The activity of Faith is clogg'd by natural unbelief : O, what difficulties is every work of Faith carried through ? *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief,* Mark. 9. 24. It cramps the hand of Faith in every part of its work ; the soul sensibly feels it self bound and fetter'd by its own unbelief, so that it cannot *assent* with that fulness, clearness, and determinateness that it would. It cannot *apply* with that strength, certainty, and comfort it desires ; and thus are the wings of Faith

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pinion'd, that when we should soar aloft in the highest acts of sweet communion with God, we can but flutter upon the Earth, and make some weak essays and offers Heaven-ward, which oftentimes are frustrated and put by, through the unbelief that is in us.

Thirdly : The excitation of the affection is rendred difficult by reason of that natural deadness and hardness that is in the heart. Alas ! It's naturally an heart of stone, and as easie it is to dissolve or melt the Rocks into a sweet syrup, as the heart into Spiritual and Heavenly affections towards God. There is scarce any one thing in this world that Christians more passionately bewail, and are more sensibly afflicted for, than the deadness and hardness of their own hearts. Nothing is found sufficient sometimes to affect, and raise them ; and yet if they be not excited out of their torpor and stupidity, they cannot have Communion with God in duties.

Secondly : And if we enquire into the reasons why poor Christians find themselves

selves more infested by natural Corruption in the seasons of duty, than at other times, the reasons are obvious to him that considers, 1. That Duty irritates it. 2. Satan excites it. 3. God permits it to be so.

First : Corruption is irritated by duty, it's provoked by that which bridles and purges it : Nothing is found more destructive to Sin, than Communion with God is, and therefore nothing makes a fiercer opposition to all fellowship and communion betwixt the soul and its God, than sin doth. As Waters swell and rage when they are obstructed by a dam, so do our Corruptions, when obstructed and check'd by duty. Sin would fain make men leave praying, and Prayer would fain make men leave sinning.

Secondly : As *Duty* irritates it, so *Satan* excites it, especially in such seasons. When *Joshua*, the High Priest, stood before the Lord, Satan was seen standing at his right hand to resist him, *Zeck.* 3. 1. How hard is it for a Christian then to be dexterous, apt, and ready for spiritual works, whilst *Satan* stands at his right hand, the working hand, to make resistance. E 4 The

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The Devil is aware that one hour of close spiritual and hearty converse with God in Prayer, is able to pull down what he hath been contriving and building many a year. Now this envious Spirit having an easie access to the phansie, that busie and unruly power of the soul, will not be wanting to create such figments and notions in it, as like a rapid stream shall carry away the soul and all its thoughts from God in duty. Oh, what adoe have most Christians to prevent the fallies and excursions of their hearts from God at such times !

Thirdly: As Satan exercises it, so the Wise and Holy God, for good ends to his People, permits it to be so.

This Thorn in the Flesh keeps them humble; these lamented destructions and corruptions in their duties destroys their dependance upon them, and glorying in them. For if we be so prone to pride and confidence in our duties, amidst such sensible workings and minglings of Corruption with them, what should we be if they were more pure and excellent ? These things also

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so make the Saints weary of this World, and to groan within themselves after the more perfect state, wherein God shall be enjoyed and seen in more perfection and satisfaction. But

Thirdly: This in the mean time cannot but be a very grievous affliction and pressure to the gracious soul, to be thus clog'd and infested by its own Corruptions in the very season of its communion with God. For,

First: By this the soul is rendred very unsuitable to that holy presence it approaches, *Hab. 1. 13. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon Iniquity.* Must the great and blessed God wait upon a poor Worm till it be at leisure to attend him? Must he be forsaken for every trifle that comes in the way of its phansie? Oh, how provoking an evil is this! *Surely God beareth not Vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it, Job 35. 13.* This unsuitableness of our spirits to the Lord, cannot do less than cover our faces with shame, as it did, *Ezra. 9. 6. O my God,*

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God I am ashamed, and even blush to look up unto thee.

Secondly : By this those benefits and comforts are intercepted, which are better than life : There is a sensible presence of God, there are manifestations of pardon, peace, and love ; there are reviving influences and fresh anointings of the Spirit ; there are a thousand mercies of this kind, that in their season are communicated to men in the way of duty ; and would it not grieve a man to the very heart and soul, to be defeated of those inestimable treasures, by the breaking forth of the Unbelief, Pride, or Vanity of his own heart, when such mercies are almost in his hand ? *Your iniquities* (saith the Prophet) *have separated betwixt you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear,* Isa. 59. 2. O cruel covering ! O dismal Cloud ! that hides the face of God from his People, that they cannot behold it. *Wherefore am I come from Geshur* (saith Absalom) *if I may not see the Kings face ?*

What do I here upon my knees, saith a Christian.

Christian, if I may not see God? Duties are nothing to me without God: The World and all its comforts are dry and tasteless things to me without God: His manifested favour, and sealed love are the very life of my life, and from this the corruptions of my own heart have cut me off.

Thirdly: By these things the beauty and excellency of duties are defaced. These dead flies spoil that excellent Ointment; for wherein consists the beauty and true excellencies of duties, but in that Spirituality and Heavenly temper of soul, with which they are performed? This makes them suitable to their object, *Joh. 4. 24.* take away spirituality from duties, and then you may number them among your sins, and the matters of your shame and sorrow. Take away the heart from duty, and what remains but a dead carcass, without life or beauty?

Fourthly: By these things gracious souls are greatly puzzled and perplexed about their estate and condition. This is the

the fountain of their fears and doubtings.

O, when a man feels such deadness in his heart towards God, such stiffness in his will to the will of God, such a listless, careless temper to all that is spiritual? How (thinks he) can this consist with a renewed state and temper? Sure no Christian is troubled with such an heart as mine is; especially when it shall be found in its ordinary course so free, nimble, and indefatigable in its pursuits and entertainments of things sensual and earthly. There it is as the Chariots of *Aminadab*, but here, like *Pharaoh's* Chariots; there it as much needs the *Curb*, as it doth the *Spur* here. Lord, saith the poor soul, I know not what to do: If I do not look into my heart I cannot be sincere; and if I do, I can have no comfort. This is a sad perplexity indeed.

Fifthly and lastly: By these things the Spirit of God is grieved, and that which grieves him cannot but be a grief and burden to us: His motions are quench'd by these Corruptions, his sanctifying designs (as much as lies in us) obstructed by them, surely

surely then there is cause enough why a Christian should follow every vain thought with a deep sigh, and every stirring of unbelief with a sad tear.

The usefulness of this point is great, and exceeding seasonable, when we are to draw nigh to God, and address our selves to spiritual duties; It may to great purpose be improved by ways,

1. Of Information, 2. Direction. 3. Consolation.

We may greatly improve it for our Information in the following particulars.

Hence we may take our measures of the wonderful and astonishing grace and condescension of God to his People, who notwithstanding all that evil which is present with them in the good they do, will not reject their persons or duties for all that.

How doth free grace make its own way through swarms of Vanity! How doth it break through all the deadness, infidelity and hardness of our hearts to do us good!

F

Though

Though evil be present with us, our gracious God will not be absent from us notwithstanding that.

How greatly was the Spouse amaz'd at the unexpected condescension and grace of Christ in this matter? *Cant. 2. 8. It is the voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh leaping over the Mountains, skipping over the Hills. It is the Voice of my Beloved.* That abrupt, cutted expression shews a perfect surprise. She saw mountains of guilt and unworthiness betwixt Christ and her Soul, and yet behold he comes skipping over all those mountains and hills: O free grace! rich and admirable grace, which with so many *notwithstandings*, and *neverthelesses*, will save and comfort the poor unworthy soul!

2. How little reason have any of us to be proud of our best performances! *There is not a just man upon Earth, that doth good, and sinneth not*, saith Solomon, Eccles. 7. 20. If there be something supernaturally good in our duties, yet there is abundance of natural evil commixed with that good; the evil is wholly ours, the good wholly
God's

Gods: we have no reason then to glory in our best performances.

It hath been a question with some, whether some short transient act of a regenerate soul may not be free from sin; but it was never question'd whether any continued act, much less a course of actions could be without sin. Evil will be present with us in all we do, 'twill be with us in our Closets, present even in the awful presence of the holy God, in the most high and solemn duties of Religion, in the most pure and spiritual actions that pass from us; cease then as from dependance, so from Pride and Conceitedness in all you do. Whilst our natures are sanctified but in part, and our principles mixt, our duties and performances can never be pure. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one,* Job 14. 4.

3. How are we all obliged to bless God for *Jesus* the *Mediator*, to make us and our sinful duties acceptable to God? Sad were our case if this High Priest did not bear the Iniquity of our holy things, as it is, *Exod. 28. 38.* 'Tis his Oblation and Intercession

cession that obtains and continues our pardon for our Prayer-sins, our Hearing-sins, our Sacrament-sins: These alone would eternally damn us, if we had no other, did not free grace *make us accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. 1. 6. When evil is present with us, then is Christ our *Advocate*, present with the Father for us; and thence it is that we are not destroyed upon our knees, and that the jealousy of God breaks not forth as fire to devour us in our very duties.

4. If evil be present with us, yea, inherent in us, in our best duties, what need had Christians then to watch against the external occasions of sin, and to keep a close guard upon their senses, especially when they have to do with God!

There's danger enough from within, you need not open another door from without. This natural corruption is too active in it self, if there be no irritation by any external occasion; how much more when the eye and ear are opened and unguarded, and occasions are offer'd it from without.

Watch-

Watching is half the work of a Christian, whilst he is praying, *Eph*, 6. 18. The *Arabian Proverb* is as *instructive* as it is *mystical*; shut the Windows that the House may be light.

5. If evil be present when we would do good, if it infest us in our best duties; then certainly there is no rest to be expected for any of Gods People in this world. Where shall we go to be free from sin? If any where, let us go to our Closets, to our knees, to the Ordinances of God; yea, but even there evil is and will be present with us, if we cannot be free from evil there, it's vain to expect it elsewhere in this world. Only in Heaven Believers rest from sin, when once they are absent from the body, and present with the Lord, sin shall no more be present with them; which should make all that hate sin, long for Heaven, and be willing to be dissolved, and be with Christ.

2. *For Direction.* Let all that experimentally sense and feel what the Apostle here mourns over, carefully attend such *directions*

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rections as may prevent the spoil of their duties by the working of their corruptions in them.

Though no rules are found sufficient to prevent wholly the influence of our Corruptions upon our duties, yet own it as a special mercy, if it may in any measure be prevented, or restrained; in order whereunto, I shall hint briefly these following rules, which the experience of many Christians hath recommended as exceeding useful in this case.

Rule 1. *Be more diligent in preparation for your duties, if you would meet with less interruption in your duties.* The very light of nature teacheth solemn preparation to all important and weighty business; and is there more solemn and concerning business in all the world, than that which thou transactest with God in duties? Angels approach not this God with whom thou hast to do, without profound respects to his immense greatness and awful holiness, *Isa.* 6. 3. When you stretch forth your hands, it is required that you first prepare your hearts, *Job* 1. 13. Rule

Rule 2. *Realize the presence of God in all your duties, and awe your hearts all that you are able by that consideration.* O, think what a piercing holy eye beholds thy heart, and tries thy reins. Wouldst thou not be really ashamed, if thy thoughts were but vocal to men, and the workings and wanderings of thy heart visible to those that joyn with thee in the same duty? O, if the presence of God were more realized, certainly your hearts would be better secured against the incursions of your Corruptions!

Rule 3. *Labour for a deeper measure and degree of Sanctification*; many other rules are but *Spiritual Anodynes*, to give present ease; but this is the way to a real *Cure*: a thousand things may be found helpful to put by a vain thought for the present, but then it returns again, and it may be with more strength: This is the proper method to dry the *spring*, when others are but attempts to divert the *stream*, If habits of grace were more deeply radicated, acts of grace would be more easie to us, and flow more freely from us.

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Rule 4. Lastly : Consider what an aggravation it is to your evil, to vent it self in the special presence of God in duties. See how Paul mourns over it in the Text. It is not only a sin, but an affronting of God to his Face ; this grieving of his Spirit, is the spoil of thy duty ; it is (as one aptly calls it) *Jobex infernalis*, an hellish Bar or Remera to all sweet and free intercourse of the soul with God.

3. Consolation. But whilst I am representing the evil of it to some, it may be there are others over-whelmed with the sorrowful sense of it, even to discouragement and despondency: Poor Christian, is this thy case? Are all the Afflictions in the world nothing to thee in comparison with this evil which is present with thee, when thou wouldst do good? Well, though thou canst not do the good thou wouldst, nor free thy self yet from the evil thou wouldst rather than live, be freed from : There are four things that may be much relief to thy pensive soul.

First : Though the presence of evil even in thy best duties be sad, yet thy grief, and affliction

ag- tion for it, is sweet. That is a sad sin, but
f in this is a sweet sign: It is not heart-evils,
See heart-wandrings in duties, hardness, and
It unbelief that Hypocrites mourn for, but
God more gross and external evils. Let this
is trouble for sin comfort thee, when the
ly presence of sin grieves thee.

or Secondly: God accepts through Jesus
of Christ, what you do sincerely, though you
e- can do nothing purely and perfectly, Cant.
be 5. 1. Your sincerity is your Evangelical
ne perfection; the evil that is present is not
e- imputed; the good that is present, is (not-
is withstanding that commixed evil) accept-
d ed, which is strong consolation.

s Thirdly: You find your case was the case
u of blessed Paul, a man of eminent Sanctity.
t And if you consult all the Saints, one by one,
f you will find them all sick of this disease;
 so that your case is not singular.

Fourthly: Your Justification is perfect,
 and without spot, though your Sanctification
 be not so; and the time is coming when your
 Sanctification shall be as your Justification
 is; and after that no more complaints.

The

The Fourth Meditation.

UPON

Ephes. .1. 13. In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of Promise.

FROM his doxology and solemn Thanksgiving, *ver. 3.* the Apostle enumerates the principal Christian priviledges that gave the occasion of that thanksgiving, among which, this in the Text is not the least, though last named.

In this one verse we have the two noble acts of Faith displaid ; its *direct* act call'd *Trusting*, and its *reflex* act, which in order of nature and time follows it, and is implied in the word *Sealing*.

In the latter clause (to which I shall confine my Meditations) four things must be remarked, *viz.* The Subject, Nature, Author, and Quality of Assurance.

1. The Subject of Assurance, which is and

and can be no other than a soul that hath closed with Christ by Faith, reflex acts necessarily presuppose direct ones. Never was any Unbeliever Sealed, except to Damnation : Assurance is peculiarly the Prerogative of Believers.

2. The Nature of Assurance, he calls it *Sealing* ; an apt metaphor to express the nature of it. For Assurance like a Seal, both confirms, declares, and distinguishes; it confirms the grant of God, declares the purpose of God, and distinguishes the person so priviledg'd from other men.

3. The Author of assurance, which is the *Spirit* ; he is the Keeper of the great Seal of Heaven, and it's his Office to confirm and seal the Believers right and interest in Christ and Heaven, *Rom. 8. 16.*

4. Lastly : The quality of this Spirit of Assurance, or the Sealing Spirit, he Seals in the quality of an holy Spirit, and of the Spirit of promise, *as an holy Spirit*, relating to his previous sanctifying work upon the sealed soul. *As the Spirit of promise*, respecting the *medium* or instrument, made use

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use of by him in this his Sealing work; for he Seals by opening and applying the promises to Believers from the Spirits order. The Note will be this.

Doct. That the privilege of Sealing follows the duty of Believing.

There is no season more proper to treat of the Sealing of the Spirit, than at a Sealing Ordinance; nor can I handle the Spirits sealing work in a more profitable method, than in satisfying these five Queries particularly; and then applying the whole.

1. What is the Spirits Sealing, and how performed? 2. Why none are Sealed till they Believe? 3. Whether all Believers are Sealed? 4. What is the privilege of being Sealed? 5. What are the effects of the Spirits Sealing?

1. Query, *What is the Spirits Sealing work, and how is it performed?*

Answer. The Sealing of the Spirit, is his giving a sure and certain testimony to the reality of that work of grace he hath wrought in our souls, and to our interest in Christ and the Promises; thereby satisfying

fyng our fears and doubts about our estate and condition.

Every matter of weight and concernment is to be proved by two sufficient Witnesses, *Deut. 19. 15.* our sincerity and interest in Christ are matters of the deepest concernment to us in all the world, and therefore need a farther witness to confirm and clear them, than that of our own spirits; the Spirit it self therefore bears witness with our spirits, *Rom. 8. 16.* Three things concur to the spirits Sealing work.

He Sanctifies the soul. He irradiates and clears that work of Sanctification. He enables it thereby to apply Promises.

The first is his *material* or objective Seal, the latter his formal Sealing. None but the Spirit of God can clear and confirm our title to Christ, for he only searcheth the deep things of God, *1 Cor. 2. 10.* and it's his office, *Rom. 8. 16.* συμπαρασπείρειν, to witness with our spirits.

This Seal or Witness of the Spirit must needs be true and certain, because Omniscience and Truth are his essential proper-

ries : He is Omniscient, *1 Cor. 2. 10.* and therefore cannot be deceived himself : He is the Spirit of Truth, *Job. 14. 17.* and therefore cannot deceive us ; so that his testimony is more infallible and satisfactory than a Voice from Heaven, *2 Pet. 1. 19.*

If an Angel should appear and tell us Christ had said to him, Go and tell such a man, that I love him, that I shed my blood for him, and will save him ; it could never give that repose and satisfaction to the mind as the internal Witness or Seal of the spirit doth ; for that may be a delusion, but this cannot. The witness of our own heart may amount to a strong probability ; but the witness of the spirit is demonstration, *1 Job. 4. 24.*

So that as it is the design and work of *Satan* to cast in doubts and fears into gracious hearts, to perplex and intangle them, so oppositely it is the work of the *Spirit* to clear and settle the sanctified soul, and fill it with peace and joy in believing, *Job. 16. 7. Rom. 14. 17.*

In Sealing he both attests the *fidelem quæ creditur,*

creditur, the doctrine or object of Faith; and the *fidem quâ creditur*, the infused habit or grace of Faith: Of the former he saith, this is my *Word*, of the latter, this is my *Work*; and his Seal or testimony is evermore agreeable to the written word, *Isa*, 8. 20. So that what he speaks in our hearts, and what he saith in the Scripture, are evermore concordant and harmonious testimonies.

To conclude, in Sealing the Believer, he doth not make use of an audible Voice, nor the Ministry of Angels, nor immediate and extraordinary revelations; but he makes use of his own *graces* implanted in our hearts, and his own *promises* written in the Scriptures; and in this method he usually brings the doubting, trembling heart of the believer to rest and comfort.

2. Query. *Why are none Sealed till after Believing?*

Ans. It cannot be denied but that many persons in the state of nature and unbelief, may have grounded confidences, and false comforts built thereupon. This is evi-

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dent from *Matth. 7. 22.* *Many will say unto me in that day Lord, Lord, have not we Prophesied in thy Name? And Job. 8. 54, 55.* *Of whom ye say that he is your God, and yet ye have not known him.* And beyond all is that startling Scripture, *Heb. 6. 4, 5.*—*Who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the World to Come, if they fall away, &c.*

But for any except real Believers to have those Witnesses and Sealings of the Spirit described above, is utterly impossible, and will evidently appear to be so, whether we consider the Author, Nature, Object, Mediums, End and Design of this work.

First: Consider the *Author* of this work, *the Spirit of God*, who is an *Holy Spirit*, as the Text calls him, and the *Spirit of Truth*, as Christ calls him, *Job. 14. 17.* and it cannot be that ever he should give testimony to a lye, or give a false witness, quite cross to the very tenour of the written word,

word, as he must do, should he Seal an Unbeliever. What though they be Elect? yet whilst Unregenerate, they have no actual interest in Christ and the Promises, and therefore can have none Sealed by the Spirit. *Fri s est predicare de esse quàm de cognosci*; we must be Saints before we can be known to be so.

Secondly: Consider but the nature of this work, and it cannot be, that ever an Unbeliever should be Sealed by the Spirit: For assurance is produced in our souls by the reflexive acts of our Faith. The Spirit helps us to reflect upon what hath been done by him formerly upon our hearts. *Hereby we know that we know him*, 1 Joh. 2. 3. To know that we know, is a reflex act; now it's impossible there should be a reflex before there hath been a direct act. No man can have the evidence of his Faith, before the habit be infused, and the vital act first performed.

Thirdly: Consider the *object matter*, to which he Seals, and it will be found to be his own Sanctifying operations upon our hearts,

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hearts, and consequently to our priviledges in Christ, *Rom. 8. 16. 1 Job. 3. 24.* The thing or matter attested is, that Christ abideth in us, and that we are the Children of God. But no such thing can be Sealed till we believe, for neither our Adoption nor Sanctification can be before Faith.

Fourthly : Consider the *mediums* or instruments used by the Spirit in his Sealing work ; the promises are his sealing instruments, and on that account he is call'd *the Spirit of Promise in the Text*: Not only because he is the Spirit promised, but as the Promises contain the spirit, so the Spirit uses the Promises (*i. e.*) clears them to our understandings, and helps us to apply them to our souls; but this he never doth, nor can do, till the soul by Faith have union with Christ ; for till then it hath no right in the Promises.

Fifthly and lastly : Consider the end and design of this work of the Spirit, which is to secure to the soul its peace, pardon, and salvation in Christ, he seals Believers to the day of Redemption, *Eph. 4. 30.*
(*i. e.*)

(i. e.) to their compleat Salvation: So then it must be equally impossible for an Unbeliever to be sealed as to be saved.

3. Query. *The next enquiry is, Whether all Believers are Sealed by the Spirit?*

Answer. The resolution of this Query will depend upon several distinctions that must be made upon this matter.

1. *Distinction.* We must distinguish the different kinds of the Spirits sealing; all his Sealing work is not of one kind, nor to one and the same use and end.

There is an *Objective* Seal which distinguishes the person, and a *Formal* Seal which clears and ratifies his interest in Christ and Salvation. The first he doth in *Sanctifying* us; the second in *Assuring* us.

When he Seals us *Objectively*, that is, when he Sanctifies us really by the infusion of grace, he Seals us by way of distinction from other men, which is one end of Sealing; for though in respect of Gods decree and purpose there was a difference betwixt us and others before time, 2 Tim. 2. 19. and although in regard of Christs intention

in his death, there was a difference betwixt us and others, *Job.* 17. 9. yet all this while there is no personal, actual difference betwixt us and others, till Sanctification do make one, *Eph.* 2. 3. and *1 Cor.* 6. 11. But the Sanctification of the Spirit makes a real difference in the state and temper of the person, *2 Cor.* 5. 17. and manifests that difference which Election put betwixt us and others before time, *1 Thes.* 1. 4, 5. And yet all this while a man may not be formally Sealed (*i. e.*) his Sanctification may be very doubtful to himself, and he may labour under great fears about it.

2. *Distinction.* The seasons of the Spirit's sealing, must be distinguished; and these are to some,

First: Immediately upon the souls first closing with Christ at Conversion, especially when Conversion is wrought at riper age, and is usher'd in by a greater degree of the spirit of bondage, and deep inward terrors. Thus the *Prodigal* (the emblem of a Convert so brought home to God) was entertained with the fatted Calf and Musick,

but

but all find not this presently, as some do.

Secondly : Times of eminent Communion with God are Sealing times : There are extraordinary out-lets of Peace, Joy, and Comfort, at some seasons in duty, which makes the state of the soul very clear; and banishes all scruples and fears from the heart.

Thirdly : Others are Sealed upon some eminent hazard they have been exposed to for Christ, or some extraordinary sufferings they have undergone for Christ; wherein they have carried it with eminent meekness, patience, and self denial, 2 Cor. 1. 4, 5. Thus the Martyrs were many times Sealed in the depth of their sufferings.

Fourthly : It's usually found that a Sealing time follows a dark day of desertion and sore combats with temptation. *Post Nubila Phæbus*. So that Text, Rev. 2. 17. is expounded by some, *To him that overcometh will I give the white stone, and the new name.*

Fifthly: Dying-times prove Sealing-times

to many souls, if their whole life have been like that day described by the Prophet, *Zech. 14. 17.* neither dark nor light, a life betwixt hopes and fears, yet at Evening-time it hath been light.

3. *Distinction.* Lastly : We must distinguish the several ways and manners of Sealing. Some are *extraordinary* and immediate, vouchsafed only to some persons, at some special times and seasons. Thus *Zacheus* was in an extraordinary and immediate way ascertained of his Salvation, *Luk. 19. 9.* *This day is Salvation come to this House.* And so the Paralytic, *Mark. 2. 5.* Son (saith Christ.) *thy sins be forgiven thee.* But these immediate ways are ceased ; no man may now expect by any new Revelation or Sign from heaven, by any Voice, or extraordinary Inspiration to have his Salvation sealed, but must expect that mercy in Gods ordinary way and method, searching the Scriptures, examining our own hearts, and waiting on the Lord in prayer.

The Learned *Gerson* gives an instance of
one

one that had been long upon the borders of despair, and at last sweetly assured and settled; and being asked how he attained that Assurance, he answered, *Non ex nova aliqua revelatione*, &c. Not by any new revelation, but by subjecting my understanding to, and comparing my heart with the written word.

And Mr. *Roberts* in his Treatise of the Covenants, speaks of another that so vehemently panted after the Sealings and Assurance of the love of God to his soul, that for a long time he earnestly desired some Voice from Heaven; and sometimes walking in the solitary Fields, earnestly desired some miraculous voice from the Trees or Stones there: This was denied him, but in time a better was afforded in a scriptural way.

Now to resolve the Query out of these distinctions.

First: Though all Believers have not the *formal* Sealings of the Spirit, yet they have the *objective*, or material Seal; that is, the Spirit is in them as a sanctifying spirit, putting

a real difference betwixt them and others, when he is not with them by way of evidence and assurance of sanctification.

Secondly : Though all Believers are not Sealed at one and the same time, yet there are few, if any Believers, but do meet with one season or other in this life, wherein the Lord doth Seal them, if not at their first close with Christ, as many have been Sealed, yet in some choice and eminent season of communion with God, such golden spots of time, such precious seasons most Christians can speak of. Though as *Bernard* speaks, it be *rara hora, brevis mora*. Seldom, but sweet : Or if not in the course of their *active obedience*, 'tis a thousand to one but they shall meet it in the way of their *passive obedience*, if God exercise them eminently under the cross, or after a dark cloud of desertion, or in a dying hour.

Thirdly and lastly : Though God now Seals not men in an extraordinary and immediate way by Revelation, immediate Inspiration, or Voices from Heaven, yet most Christians are sealed in the ordinary way

way of the Spirit, under one Ordinance or other, in one duty or other.

4. Query. *What is the priviledge of being Sealed by the Spirit ?*

Answer. Much every way ; words cannot express the riches of this mercy ; for let us but consider the four following particulars, and you will admire the mercy.

First : Consider whose act and proper work Sealing is. God doth not send *Angels* upon this Errand ; though if he did, that would be a great honour to poor dust and ashes, but he sends his Spirit to do it. Oh, the Condescension of the great God to men ! this is a greater honour than if millions of Angels were imploy'd about it.

And then as to certainty and satisfaction, it is beyond all other ways and methods in the world , for in miraculous Voices and Inspirations it's possible there may *subesse falsum*, be found some Cheat or Imposture of the Devil ; but the spirits witness in the heart, suitable to his revelation in the Scrip-

H

ture

ture cannot deceive us.

Secondly : The conclusion or truth sealed, is ravishing and transporting. All Christians vehemently pant for it, few have the enjoyment of it for any long continuance. But whilst they do enjoy it, they enjoy Heaven upon Earth, a joy beyond all the joys of this world. To have this conclusion surely Sealed, *Christ is mine*, my sin is pardoned, I shall be saved from wrath, through him : O, what is this ! what is this !

Thirdly : Consider the subject, or person Sealed, a poor sinful wretch that hath ten thousand times over grieved the good Spirit of God, by whom notwithstanding thou art Sealed to the day of Redemption : Thou hast by every sin deserved to be sealed up to Damnation : Thou hast reason to account and esteem thy self much inferior in graces and duties to many thousands of the Saints that are panting after this privilege, and cannot obtain it : O, the riches of the goodness of God !

Fourthly and lastly, Consider the designs
and

and aims of the Spirit in his Sealing thy soul, which are

1. To secure Heaven to thee for ever.

2. As intermediate thereunto, to bring very much of Heaven into thy soul, in the way to it; indeed to give thee two Heavens, whilst many others must suffer two Hells.

5. Query. *Lastly: We will enquire what are the effects of the Spirits sealing upon our souls, by which we may distinguish and clearly discern it from all delusions of Satan, and all Impostures whatsoever?*

Answer. The genuine and proper effects and fruits of Sealing, are, 1. Inflamed Love. 2. Renewed Care. 3. Deep Abasements. 4. Increase of strength. 5. A desire to be with the Lord. 6. Improved Mortification to the world.

Wheresoever these are found consequent to our Communion with God, and his manifestations of himself to us therein, they put it beyond all doubt, that it was the Seal of his own blessed Spirit, and no delusion.

First : The Sealings of the Spirit cannot but inflame the love of the soul in a very intense degree towards God : One flame doth not more naturally beget another, than the love of God doth kindle the love of a gracious soul to him. *We have known and believed the love that God bath to us,* 1 Joh. 4. 16, 19. When Christ had forgiven much to that poor Woman that had sin'd much, and manifested pardoning mercy to her soul ; O, how much was her love to Christ inflamed thereby ? *Luke 7. 47.*

Secondly : Renewed care and diligence follows the Sealings of the Spirit. Now is the soul at the foot of Christ, as *Mary* was at the *Sepulchre*, with fear and great Joy. He that Travels the Road with a rich treasure about him, is afraid of a Thief in every bush. This is exemplified in the Spouse, who had endured many a sad day and night in Christs absence, and sought him sorrowing ; but when she had regained his felt and sensible presence, it's said, *Cant. 3. 4. I found him whom my soul loveth ; I held him, and would not let him go.* She

She doth not (as Mr *Durham* speaks) lay by diligence, as if all were done; but is of new taken up with as great care to retain and improve this mercy, as before she was solicitous to obtain it. Whether a Believer want or have, whether he be seeking or enjoying, there is still matter of exercise for him in his condition.

Thirdly: Deep abasement and great humblings use to follow the eminent appearances of God to the souls of men. *Lord*, (said that Disciple) *how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to us, and not unto the world?* Joh. 14. 22. When God Sealed the Covenant to *Abraham*, to be a God to him, at this *Abraham* fell upon his face, Gen. 17. 1, 2, 3. Never doth a soul lie lower in the dust, and abhor it self, than when the Lord makes the most signal manifestations of his grace and love to it.

Fourthly: Increased strength follows the sealings of the Spirit. New powers enter into the soul, and a sensible improvement of its abilities for duty: Or ever *I was aware* (saith the Spouse) *my soul made me as the*

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Chariots of Aminadab Cant. 6. 12.

Now the wheels of the soul being oyled with the Joy and comfort of the Spirit run nimble in the ways of obedience. The Joy of the Lord is your strength.

Fifthly : Sealings of the Spirit, inflame the desires of the soul after Heaven, and make it long to go home. Nothing makes death so undesirable to the Saints, as the doubts and fears that hang upon their Spirits about their condition. Were their evidences for Heaven clear, and their doubts resolved, they would, as the Apostle speaks, *desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*, Phil. 1. 23. If once the great question of our interest in Christ be thoroughly decided, and all be clear betwixt us and our God, we shall find *Life* the matter of *Patience*, and *Death* the object of *desire*.

Sixthly and lastly : Improved Mortification to the world, flows naturally from the Sealings and Assurances of the love of God to our souls. It is with our souls after such a view of Heaven, and a sealed Interest therein, as it is with him that hath been
gazing

gazing upon that glorious Creature the Sun, when he comes to cast his eye again upon the Earth, all things seem dark and cloudy to him. He sees no beauty in any of those things, because of that excellent lustre which he lately beheld. *We know* (saith the Apostle) *that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolv'd, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; there's Assurance or Sealing: For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be cloathed upon with our house which is from Heaven.* There's the natural effect of it, 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2.

Uses. The point speaks to three sorts of persons, viz. 1. To those that have not yet been Sealed. 2. To those that once had, but now want this comfort. 3. To those that enjoy the comforts of it.

First: To those that yet want this mercy, who have not been formally Sealed by any assurance of their title to Christ, but all their days have been clog'd with fears and doubts of their condition. To such my Counsel is,

First: That you be not quiet under these uncertainties, but pant after the assurance of peace and pardon. Say unto Christ as the Spouse did, *Cant. 8. 6. Set me as a Seal upon thy heart, as a Seal upon thine arm*; Pant after it as *David* did, *Psal. 35. 3. Say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation.*

How can you look upon such precious promises, and not dare to tast them? How can you hear others speak of their satisfaction, peace, and assurance, and be quiet until you also have attained it? What is it that hinders this mercy that it cannot come home to your souls? Is it your neglect of duty? O, stir up your selves to take hold of God! Is it want of a through search and examination of your estate? O, let not thine eyes find rest, till that be fully done: Is it some special guilt upon thy soul that grieves the Spirit of God? Be restless till it be removed. I know this mercy is not at your command, do what you can do; but yet I also know when God bestows it, he usually doth it in these ways of our duty. Secondly:

Secondly : To those that once had, but now want this blessing, who say as *Job 29. 2, 3.* *O that it were with me as in days past !* The darkness is the greater to you, because you have walked in the light of the Lord. The sum of Christs Counsel in this case is given in three words, *Rev. 2. 5. Remember, Repent, Reform.*

First : *Remember* (i. e.) ponder, consider, compare time with time, and state with state, how well it once was, how sad it now is.

Secondly : *Repent*, mourn over these your sinful relapses ; sure you may challenge the first place among all the mourners in the world. Your loss is great. O, better to have lost the light of your eyes, than this sweet light of Gods countenance ; your sin hath separated betwixt you and your God, O mourn over it !

Thirdly : *Reform*. Do your first works again. O Christian ! consider thy heart is sunk deeper into the world than it was wont to be. Thy duties are fewer, and thy zeal and affection to God much abated.

Return.

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Return, return, O back-sliding soul, and labour to recover thy first love to Christ, what ever pains it cost thee.

Lastly: To those that do enjoy these choice and invaluable mercies, the Sealings of the Spirit.

First: Take heed that you grieve not the good Spirit of God, *by whom you are Sealed to the day of Redemption*, Eph. 4. 30. He hath comforted you, don't you grieve him: The Spirit is a tender and delicate thing, you may quickly deprive your selves of his joy and peace.

2dly: Be humble under this advancement & dignity. If your hearts once begin to swell look out for humbling dispensations quickly, 2 Cor. 12. 7. This treasure is always kept in the Vessel of a contrite & humble heart.

Thirdly: Keep close to duty, yea, tack one duty to another by intermediate Ejaculations. If care of duty be once remitted, you are not far from a sad change of your condition.

Fourthly: Improve all Ordinances, especially this great Sealing Ordinance for your farther confirmation and establishment.

ment. Act your Faith to the uttermost of its ability upon Christ Crucified, and comfort will flow in : The more the direct acts of Faith are exercised, the more powerful and sweet its reflex acts are like to be.

The Fifth Meditation.

U P O N

John I. 29. Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.

THE scope of this Chapter is to prove the Divinity and Eternal God-head of Jesus Christ. One of those Arguments, by which this great Article of Faith is confirmed and proved, is the Testimony of *John*. This testimony of *John* is the more remarkable, because it was before Prophe- sied of him, that when the *Messiah* should come, this Messenger should go before his face to prepare the way for him, *Mal. 3. 1.*

Now among all the Testimonies that ever *John* gave of Christ, none ever was,
or

or could be more full and clear than this in the Text.

Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sin of VWorld.

In which words are remarkable, 1. The Preface to his Testimony. 2. The Testimony it self.

First: The Preface or Introduction to *Johns* Testimony; *Behold*. There is a double use in Scripture of this word. Sometimes it's used by way of *Indication*, and sometimes by way of *Excitation*. In the first it points out the person; in the last it raises our affections to him. In this place it hath both these Uses.

Behold the Lamb of God. q. d. This is the great expectation and hope of all Ages. This person whom you behold, is the desire of all Nations. Loe, this is God manifest in flesh. This is the great Sacrifice, *the Lamb of God*. Never did humane eyes behold such an object before.

Secondly: The testimony it self, which must be considered two ways, as it respects, 1. The truth and reality. 2. The

virtue

vertue and dignity of Christ its object.

First : *Johns* Testimony respects the truth and reality of the object; this is *ὁ ἀμνος*, the Lamb of God, the very *Anti-type* to which all legal Sacrifices had respect, and from which they derived all their value and vertue; grace and truth came by Christ, as he had said before, *ver. 17.* The Paschal Lamb, and Lamb for daily Sacrifice, were but the Types and Shadows of this Lamb of God.

Secondly : His Testimony respects the vertue and dignity of Christ and his Blood. *He taketh away the Sin of the World.* The Greek word, *ἀπαῖν* (as *De Dieu* a Learned Critick observes) answers both the Hebrew words *כַּף נִסְחָו* and *Isa. 53.* and signifies not only to bear, but to bear away; *portando expiat, expiando aufert, efficitque ut remittatur.* By bearing sin, he expiates it; and by expiating, takes it away, or procures the remission of it. The expression seems to allude to the *scape Goat*, mentioned, *Levit. 16. 22.* Thus
I Christ

Christ really and wholly takes away the sin of the world, (*i.e.*) the sin of all Believers in the world, for whom he was Sacrificed, as *Drusius* well expounds it, concurrent with the stream of sound Expositors.

So that this is a very full Testimony which *John* gives to *Christ*, and it is given with great affection and admiration of him: *Behold*, yea, admire in beholding the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world; behold him with affections suitable to such an object. *Ecce persona à Deo ordinata in victimam ad expiandum peccata.* *Grotius*. Behold the person appointed by God for a sacrifice to expiate sin. Now though this Scripture be very fruitful in practical observations, yet it is not my purpose at this time to note or prosecute any of them, except this one, which rises from the præfatory particle, or that note of admiration, with which *Johns* Testimony of Christ is usher'd in; *Behold the Lamb of God*. And the note thence will be this:

*Doct. That Jesus Christ the Lamb of God,
is to be beheld with admiration and
affection*

affection suitable to such an object.

Christ is beheld by men three ways.

First: *Carnally*, with an eye of flesh. So men saw him in the days of his flesh, and despised him, *Isa.* 53. 2 Carnal eyes saw no beauty in him that he should be desired.

Secondly: *Fiducially*, by the eye of Faith; believing is seeing Christ, *Job.* 6. 40. Faith is to the Saints instead of eyes; by it they make Christ present, though the Heavens have received him out of our carnal sight.

Thirdly: *Beatifically*, by the glorified eye. So the spirits of just men made Perfect, do by their mental eye see him in glory, and all the Saints after the Resurrection, shall with these Corporeal eyes, see their Redeemer, according to *Job* 19. 26, 27.

The sight of Christ by Faith (which is all the sight of him that any man now hath, or can have in this world) as it is much more excellent than the first, for *blessed are they that have not seen, and yet be-*

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*lieve, Joh. 20. 29. So it is much inferiour to the last, 1 Cor. 13. 12. For now we see darkly through a glass, but then face to face. But though it be an inferior Vision, in respect of that which is immediate and perfect, yet the eye of Faith is a precious eye, and the Visions of Christ by Faith, are ravishing Visions; and he that beholds Christ, the Lamb of God, by a steddy fixed eye of faith, cannot but admire, and be deeply affected with such a sight of him. The views of Christ by Faith are ravishing and transporting views, 1 Pet. 1. 8. *Whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.**

It is a disparagement to so glorious an object as Christ, to behold him, and not wonder; to see, and not love him. Certainly the admiration, love, delight, and joy of our hearts, are all at the command of Faith: For let us but consider what ravishing excellencies are in Christ, for the eye of a Believer to behold and admire.

First: God is in Christ, 2 Cor. 5. 19.

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He is God manifest in the flesh, 1 Tim. 3. 16. A God Incarnate, is the worlds wonder ; Here is Finite and Infinite joyn'd in one ; Eternity matcht with Time ; the Creator and creature making but one person. *The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a Woman shall compass a man,* Jer. 31. 22. 'Tis an argument of weakness to admire little things, and of stupidity not to admire great things, Many Miracles (saith one) were wrought by Christ in the flesh ; but the greatest of all Miracles was his assumption of flesh.

Secondly : The Wisdom of God is in Christ ; yea, *in him are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge,* Col. 2. 3. Never did the Divine Wisdom display its glorious beams in the eyes of Men and Angels in any work of God, since the beginning of time, as it hath done in the designation of Christ to be the Lamb of God, a Sacrifice for sin. *Behold the Lamb of God ;* and in him, behold the unsearchable Wisdom of God, in recovering the Elect perfectly from all the danger of sin, and yet

making sin more dreadful to them by the way of their recovery from it, than ever it could be made by any other consideration.

Infinite Wisdom in suiting the Sinners remedy to the cause of his Disease! The Disease was the Pride of Man; the Remedy was the Humiliation of the Son of God. Man affected to be as God, that ruin'd him; God comes down, assumes flesh, and will be found in fashion as a man; that saved him.

O profound Wisdom! which from the loss and ruine of our Primitive glory, which was the undoing of us, soul and body, takes the occasion of raising us to a far better state, and settles us in it, with a much better security than the former.

Who but Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God (as he is called, *1 Cor. 1. 24.*) could ever have ordered and over ruled the worst of evils, so as by occasion of the breach of the Law to raise more glory to God than ever could have been given to him, by the most punctual observation of its commands,

or

or by the most rigorous execution of its penalties. O the astonishing depth of Wisdom!

Thirdly: The *love* of God is in Christ. Behold the Lamb of God! and in him, behold the love of God in the highest and most triumphant discovery that ever was or can be made of it in this world, 1 *Job.* 4. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins.* O here, here is the love of God to Sinners; he manifests love to us in our daily provisions, protections, deliverances, and comforts. That we have health when others groan under pains, therein is love. That we have bread to eat, when others are ready to perish, therein is love. O! but to have Christ to be a Propitiation for us, when the Angels that fell were left desperate, therein was love indeed. All the love that breaks out in the variety of providences for us in this world, in our Health and Estates, in our Relations and Comforts, is nothing compar'd with this love. *Herein is love indeed.*

Fourthly : The tender *mercies* of God over poor Sinners are in Christ: As Christ is the mercy promised, *Luk. 1. 72.* the capital mercy, so he is the Channel through which all the streams of Gods mercy flow freely to the Sons of men, *Jude 21.* the mercy of God to Eternal life, or his saving mercies are only dispensed to us through Jesus Christ. *Behold the Lamb of God!* A Lamb prepared by the astonishing mercy of God, a Sacrifice for us, when no Sacrifice is laid out for fallen Angels. Mercy alone hath made this difference; mercy opened its tender eye, and looked through Christ upon us in the depth of our misery. In Christ it is that the milder attribute of mercy is exercised upon us, whilst severe Justice punishes them.

Fifthly : All the hopes of poor Sinners are in Christ, *Col. 1. 27.* Take away Christ, and where is the hope of our soul? *1 Tim. 1. 1.* 'Tis by the Blood of the Lamb that we have hope towards God : In his Oblation, and no where else, our hope of Salvation finds footing. On him it is the Anchor of hope is fixed, and the soul
 stayed

stayed when the storms of fear and inward trouble do arise and beat violently upon it.

Sixthly : The Salvation of our souls to Eternity is in Christ, *Acts 4. 12.* *Neither is there any other name given under Heaven, by which we must be saved.* He is the Ark in whom we are preserved, *Jude v. 1.* Look as the sprinkling of the Blood of the *Paschal Lamb* upon the Door-posts of the *Israelites* was that which preserved them from the destroying Angel, so the Blood of Christ the Lamb of God Typified by that Blood, saves Believers from the wrath to come.

But who can open the unsearchable riches, or recount the ravishing excellencies found in Christ? Angels and the Spirits of just men made perfect behold and admire for evermore the incomparable excellencies of Christ! Heaven would be no Heaven to them, if they could not behold Christ there, *Psal. 73. 25.*

But my business rather lies in improving this point, than endeavouring farther to unfold it; for new wonders will appear in Christ, if we behold him to Eternity.

Use.

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Use. And all the improvement I shall make of it shall be in one use of *Exhortation*, bespeaking every one of you, what ever your present condition and estate be, *to behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.* And

First: If there be found among you any that are sensible of a stony, hard heart which cannot relent and mourn for all the wrong done to Jesus Christ by sin, whose affections are benumm'd and stupified by sin; so that no considerations they can urge upon their own hearts, are able to thaw them, and cause a relenting pang for sin. To such I would direct the words of this Text, as the most effectual means to melt such hearts. Look hither, hard heart, *Behold the Lamb of God.* Consider, believe and apply what is here sensibly represented, and thy heart is hard indeed if it relent not upon such a view of Christ. It's said, *Zech. 12. 10. They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and mourn.* Behold the Son of God brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter for thee a vile polluted Sinner:
Behold

Behold the invaluable Blood of this Sacrifice shed for thee: Bring thy thoughts close to this subject; think who it is that was made a Lamb for Sacrifice, for whom he endured all his unspeakable sufferings, how meekly and willingly he endured all the wrath of God and men; standing in his perfect Innocency to be slain for thee: Behold, he was made sin for thee, who had no sin; that thou who hadst no Righteousness, mightst be made the Righteousness of God in him. O, who ever loved thee at that rate Christ hath done? Who would endure that misery that Christ did endure for thy sake? Would thy Father, or the Wife of thy bosom, or thy Friend that is as thy own soul, be content to feel that for thee (though but one hour) which Christ felt when his sweat was as it had been great drops of Blood falling down to the ground? Nay, thou wouldst never taste such a cup for the saving of thine own Child, as Christ drank off, when he cried, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Behold how he loved thee!

Surely

Surely if the Rocks rent asunder at his passion, thy heart is harder than a Rock, if it thaw not at such a sight as this. Fix thine eyes a while here, and thine eye will affect thy heart.

Secondly : Is there any among us that make too light of sin, and are easily overcome by every temptation to the commission of it? O come hither and *behold the Lamb of God*, and you cannot possibly have slight thoughts of sin after such a sight of Christ. See here the price of sin, behold what it cost the Lord Jesus Christ to expiate it. Did he come into the world as a Lamb, bound with the bands of an irreverfible decree to die for sin? Did he come from the Bosom of the Father to be our Ransomer, and that at the price of his own life? Did the hand of severe Justice shed the Heart-blood of this Immaculate Lamb to satisfy for the wrongs thy sins have done to God? and yet canst thou look upon sin as a light matter? God forbid.

I remember when the Worthies of Israel
brake

brake through the host of the *Philistins*, and brought unto *David* the waters of the well of *Bethlehem*: It's said, *2 Sam.* 23. 17. *he would not drink thereof, but poured it out before the Lord, and said, Be it far from me that I should do this; is not this the blood of the men that went in Jeopardy of their lives?*

He longed for it, and yet would not taste it, how pleasant soever it would have been to him, considering what hazard was run to obtain it.

Ah Christian, it was but the hazard of their Blood that gave cheque to *David's* appetite to the water; and if the water had cost an equal quantity of their blood, yet it had been but a low argument to dissuade him from drinking it, to this consideration that now lies before thee. Thy sin actually cost the blood of Christ, one drop whereof is more valuable than all humane blood; and yet wilt thou not deny thy Lusts, nor resist a temptation for his sake? *Behold the Lamb of God slain for thy sin*, and thou canst never have slight thoughts of it any more,

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Thirdly:

Thirdly: Is there any among you that droop, and are discouraged in their spirits, because of their manifold aggravated Iniquities? who being over-weighed with the burdensome sense of sin, despond and sink, in their minds: to such I would apply the words of my Text as a sovereign Cordial to revive their hearts and hopes; *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.*

If the Blood of the Lamb can take away the sin of the world, it can take away thy sin, though there be a world of sin in thee: For do but consider Christ as *designed* from Eternity to be our *Propitiation*, Joh. 6. 27. *Him hath God the Father Sealed, as Sacrificed* in our room in the fulness of time, 1 Cor. 5. 7. *Christ our pasover is Sacrificed for us, as accepted* by the Father with greatest content and pleasure; even as a *sweet smelling savor*, Eph. 5. 2. as *publicly justified* and discharged by God the *Creditor* at his Resurrection, 1 Tim. 3. 16. and *John* 16. 9. And lastly, Consider him as now in heaven, where he *appears*
before

before God for us, as a Lamb that had been slain, Rev. 5. 6. bearing the very marks of his death, and presenting them before God, as the most effectual and moving plea to procure pardon and mercy for his people. Let these things, I say, be duly pondered, and nothing will be found more effectual to relieve the despondent minds of poor Believers against the sinking sense of their sin.

He that represents himself in the Sacrament as wounded for you, shews at the same time, to the Father in Heaven, the real Body that was wounded; than which, nothing more effectually moves mercy, or stays the sliding feet of a poor Believers hope: And that whether we consider,

First: The dignity of the body which was wounded, the most hallowed and deeply sanctified thing that ever was created, *Luk. 1. 35. That holy thing.*

Secondly: Or his *Viceregency* in suffering, *He was wounded for our transgressions, Isa. 53. 5.* It was for that hard, proud, vain, dead heart that thou complaineest of: Or

Thirdly: The *end and design* of those

wounds, which was to repair the Honour of God, and the violated Law ; the language of that blood (which is said to speak better things than the blood of *Abel*, Heb. [12. 24.] is this.

Father, have these poor souls wounded thy name ; thine Honour, thy Law ? Behold the wounds thy Justice hath inflicted on me for reparation of all that wrong they have done thee ! Oh how sweetly doth the Blood of the Lamb settle the Conscience of a poor drooping Believer !

Fourthly : Is there any among you that are faint-hearted and ready to shrink away from any sufferings for Christ, as unable to bear and endure any thing for his sake ? To such I would say in the words of this Text, *Behold the Lamb of God*. Did Christ suffer such grievous things for you, and cannot you suffer small matters for him ? Alas, what is the wrath of man to the wrath of the great and terrible God ! Beside, he was an Innocent Lamb, and deserved not to suffer the least degree of penal evil upon his own account, but thou
hast

hast deserved Hell, and yet shrinkest under the sufferings of a moment. Did he suffer so much for you, and can you suffer nothing for him? Surely he in suffering for you hath *left you an example that you should follow his steps*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. What is our Blood compar'd in dignity to the Blood of Christ? What are our sufferings compar'd in kind or degree, to the sufferings of Christ? Nothing is found to fortifie a mans spirit for sufferings, as the Meditation of Christs sufferings for us doth.

Fifthly: Is there any among you that are impatient under your own personal tryals and troubles, apt to howl under common afflictions from the hand of God, or swell with revenge under injuries from the hands of men? To such I would say, *Behold the Lamb of God*. Was Christ a *Lamb* for meekness, and art thou a *Lion* for fierceness? Was he silent, not once opening his mouth when he suffered most vile things from the hands of Sinners, and can you bear nothing? He

suffered patiently, and deserved it not ; you suffer impatiently, and have deserved infinitely more.

O that you would learn to be more Christ-like in all your tryals and afflictions. Let it not be said that Christ carried it as a *Lamb*, when he was tried ; and we like *Swine* grumbling, or howling when we are tried. O get a Christ-like temper.

Sixthly : Is there any among you that stagger at the promises through unbelief ? That cannot rely upon a word of promise, because their own unbelieving hearts fill them with unworthy suspicions of the power, faithfulness, or willingness of God to perform them to them. O that such would behold the Lamb of God , as represented in this Ordinance ! Are not all the promises of God Sealed to Believers in the Blood of this Lamb ? *Heb. 9. 17, 18, 19, 20.* Are not all the promises of God in Christ, Yea, and Amen to all that are in him ? *2 Cor. 1. 20.* Or is there any thing put in to any promise of greater value than the Blood of the Lamb that was shed to purchase

chase it? Or is not the giving of Christ to die for us, the accomplishment of the greatest promise that ever God made to us? And after the fulfilling thereof, what ground remains for any to doubt the fulfilling of lesser promises?

Lastly : Is there any among you that desire to get up your affections at this Table ; to have your hearts in a melting temper, to awaken and rouse up all the powers of your souls in so great an occasion for it as this ? *Behold the Lamb of God*, and this will do it.

Christ calls off your eyes and thoughts from all other objects to himself, *Isa. 65. 11. I said, behold me, behold me.* Fix the eye of Faith here, and you will feel a pang quickly coming upon your hearts like that, *Cant. 2. 5. Stay me with Flagons, comfort me with Apples; I am sick with love.* Your eye will affect your hearts: Whilst you behold, your hearts will melt within you.

The Sixth Meditation.

UPON

Rom. 8. 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

THIS Scripture contains a most weighty argument to encourage and confirm the Faith of Christians in the expectation of all spiritual and temporal mercies. It proceeds from the greater to the lesser affirmatively. He that delivered his Son for us, what can he deny us after such a gift? every word hath its weight.

Did not God spare (*i. e.*) abate any thing which his justice could inflict upon his Son, his *own* Son, opposed here to his *adopted* Sons, as being infinitely more excellent than they, and most dear to him above and beyond all others; but on the contrary, *delivered him up*, how dear so-

ever

ever he was unto him, to Humiliation, contradiction of Sinners, to all sorrows and temptations, yea to death, and that of the Cross, and all this *for us*, for us Sinners, for us Enemies to God, for us unlovely Wretches? *How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* How is it imaginable that God should with-hold after this, spirituals or temporals from his people? How shall he not call them effectually, justifie them freely, sanctifie them thoroughly, and glorifie them eternally? How shall he not cloath them, feed them, protect and deliver them?

Surely if he would not spare or abate to his own Son one stroke, one tear, one groan, one sigh, one circumstance of misery; it can never be imagined that ever he should after this deny or with-hold from his people, for whose sakes all this was suffered, any mercies, any comforts, any priviledge, spiritual or temporal, which is good for them, and needful to them. So that in the words we find, 1. A Proposition: 2. An Inference from it.

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The Proposition opens the severity of Gods justice to Christ ; the Inference declares the riches of his mercy to us in Christ.

First : We have here before us a Proposition containing the severity of Divine Justice towards Christ : And this is expressed two ways ; *viz.* 1. Negatively ; he spared him not. 2. Affirmatively ; he delivered him up for us.

First : Negatively ; He spared not his own Son. There is a three-fold mercy in God, *viz.* *Preventing mercy*, which steps between us and trouble : *Delivering mercy*, which takes us out of the hand of trouble : And *Sparing mercy*, which though it do not prevent nor deliver, yet it mitigates, allays, and graciously moderates our troubles ; and though sparing mercy be desirable and sweet, yet it is the least and lowest sort of mercy that God exercises towards any. Though it be mercy to have the time of sufferings shortned, or one degree of suffering abated ; yet these are the lowest and least effects of mercy, and yet these
were

were denied to Jesus Christ, when he stood in our room to satisfy for us. God spared not one drop, he abated not one degree of that wrath which Christ was to suffer for us.

Secondly : Affirmatively. But on the contrary, *he delivered him up for us all.*

He delivered him, as a Judge by sentence of Law delivers up the Prisoner to be Executed. 'Tis true, *Pilate* delivered him to be Crucified, and he also gave himself for us; but betwixt Gods delivering, *Pilates* delivering, and his own, there is this difference to be observed. In *God* it was an Act of highest Justice. In *Pilate* an Act of greatest wickedness. In *himself*, an Act of wonderful obedience.

God, as by an Act of highest Justice, delivered him up *for us*. *For us*, notes the Vicegerency of his sufferings, not only for our good as the final cause, nor only for our sins as the meritorious cause, but for us (*i. e.*) in our room, place, or stead, according to 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. and 2 *Cor.* 5. 14.

Secondly : We have also here before us

a most sweet and comfortable inference and conclusion from this proposition. If God have so delivered him, *how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* For Christ comprehends all other mercies in himself, therefore in giving him for us, all other mercies are necessarily with him given to us.

And these mercies the poorest, weakest Believer in the world may warrantably expect from God. For as God delivered him for us all, so the treasures of all spiritual and temporal mercies are thereby freely opened to us all, to the weak as well as to the strong.

He saith not Christ was delivered for all absolutely, but for us all (*i. e.*) all that Believe, all that are Elected and Called, in whose person it is manifest the Apostle here speaks, as *Pareus*, on the place well observed. Hence these two doctrinal conclusions fairly offer themselves.

Doct. 1. *That the rigor and severity of Divine Justice was executed upon Jesus Christ, when he suffered for us.*

Doct. 2. *That believers may strongly infer*

infer the greatest of mercies to themselves from the severity of Gods Justice to Jesus Christ.

I would willingly speak to both these points at this time; each affording such proper matter of meditation to us in such a season as this. To begin therefore with the first observation.

Doct. 1. *That the rigor and severity of Divine Justice was executed upon Jesus Christ, when he suffered for us: God did not spare him.*

In Zach. 13. 7. you have Gods commission given to the Sword of Justice, to smite his own Son, and that without pity. *Awake, O Sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, smite the Shepherd, &c.* And when this Commission came to be executed upon Christ, the Text tells us, *God did not spare him.* All the Vials of his wrath were poured out to the last drop.

Two things require our attention in this point. 1. Wherein the severity of Justice to Christ appeared. 2. Why must Justice

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be

be executed on him in such rigor and severity? Why there could be no abatement, mitigation, or sparing mercy shewn him in that day.

First: Wherein the severity of Divine Justice to Christ appeared. And this will manifest it self in the consideration of the following particulars.

First: Let us consider what Christ suffered, and we shall see the severity of Justice in his sufferings, for he suffered all kinds of miseries, and that in the most intense degrees of them. His sufferings were from all hands, from Heaven, Earth, and Hell: From his Enemies who Condemned him, Buffeted him, Reviled, Scourged and Crucified him. From his own Disciples and followers, one of whom perfidiously betray'd him, another openly deny'd him, and all in the hour of his greatest trouble forsook and abandoned him.

He suffered in his body the most exquisite torments; the Cross was a cruel Engine of torment, and more so to him than any other, by reason, of the excellent *Crafts* and

Sacramental Meditations. III

temperament of his body; and his most acute and delicate sense; for as the *School-men* truly say, He was *optime complexionatus*, of the most exact and exquisite Complexion; and his senses remained acute and vigorous, no way blunted, during the whole time of his sufferings, but full of life and sense to the last gasp, as may be gather'd from *Mark. 15. 39. When the Centurion which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the Ghost; he said Truly this was the Son of God.*

He suffered in his soul; yea, the sufferings of his soul, were the very soul of his sufferings; he felt in his inner man the exquisite torments and inexpressible anguish of the wrath of God. Hence was that preternatural bloody sweat in the Garden; and hence that heart-rending out-cry upon the Cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

In all which sufferings from Heaven, from Earth, from Hell, from Friends, from Enemies, there was no allay or abatement of the least degree of misery. *God spared*

not his own Son (saith the text) *but delivered him up.* Wherein the severity of Divine Justice to Jesus Christ is displayed in these five remarkable considerations following.

First : *God spared not* : If mercy, pity, and forbearance might be expected from any hand, surely it might be expected from God. He is the Fountain of mercy, *The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy,* saith the Apostle, *Jam. 5. 11.* The most melting and tender compassions of a mother to her Sucking Child, are but cruelty in comparison with divine tenderness and mercy, *Isa. 49. 15. Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have compassion upon the Son of her womb ? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.*

Can a Woman, the more affectionate Sex, forget her sucking Child, her own Child, and not a nursing child only ; her own Child whilst it hangs on her breast, and with the milk from her breast, draws love from her heart ? Can such a thing as this be in Nature ? Possibly it may ; some such
cruel

cruel Mothers may be found, but yet I will not forget thee, saith God. Though humane corrupt Nature may be so vitiated, yet from the Divine nature compassion and mercy are inseparable. It flows as waters flow from their Fountain; only here it restrained it self, and let not out one drop to Jesus Christ in the day of his sufferings. God, the God of mercy spared not.

Secondly : God *spared not*, saith the Text (*i. e.*) he abated not any thing which Justice could inflict. Christ was not spared one stroke, one tear, one groan, one drop, one sigh, one shame, one circumstance, no not the least, which Justice could demand as satisfaction for mans sin.

There be divers kinds of mercy in God; there is in him, preventing mercy, delivering mercy, and sparing mercy. Now sparing mercy (as Mr. Caryl on *Job* well observes) is the lowest mercy of all the three. 'Tis less mercy to be spared or abated some degree or circumstance of misery, than to have misery prevented by mercies stepping in betwixt us and it. It's less also than to be wholly delivered out of the hand of misery. Either of these are greater acts of mercy than to abate a degree, or shorten an hour of our trouble; the least abatement of any one circumstance of misery had been sparing mercy, though it had been but the least and lowest act of mercy; and yet even this was denied to Christ, he was not abated one minute of time, or the least degree of sorrow, God spared not.

Thirdly : He spared not *his own Son* & *yet* *is* *not*.

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So stiled *Signanter* his own or his proper Son, in a special and peculiar manner nearer and dearer to him than the *Angels*, who are his Sons by Creation, *Job* 1. 6. or any of the Saints who are his Sons by grace, in the way of Regeneration and Adoption, *Job*. 1. 12, 13. This was his own Son by Nature, a Son of an higher rank and order, *Psal.* 2. 7. begotten in an ineffable manner from all Eternity in his own divine essence; and so is his Son by Nature, having the same Essence and Nature with the Father, being co-equal, co-essential and co-eternal with the Father.

No relation in nature is so intimate, strict and dear as this; our Children are not so much our own Children, our bodies are not so much our own bodies, as Christ was Gods own Son; and yet though he were so dear to him, his other Self, his express Image, his own dear Son, he spared him not. *God spared not his own Son.*

Fourthly: And that which makes a farther discovery of Divine severity towards Jesus Christ, is this; that God spared not his own Son in the day of his greatest distress, when he cryed to his Father in an Agony, that if it were possible the cup might pass from him: For of that day this Scripture is mainly to be understood, the day when he fell to the ground and pray'd, *That if it were possible, the hour might pass. When he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee, take away this Cup from me,* *Mark.* 14. 35, 36. He beheld his own dear Son swooning under the heaviest pressure of his wrath, sweating great drops of Blood; crying, *If it be possible,*

possible, let this hour, this cup pass, and yet it could not be granted: O the severity of God! He heard the cry of *Ahab*, and spared him; he heard the *Ninevites* cry, and spared them: He heard the cries of *Hager* and *Ishmael*, and spared them: Yea, he hears the young *Ravens*, when they cry, and feeds them: But when his own Son cryed with the most vehement cry, that the Cup might pass, he cannot be excused, he must drink it up, even the very dregs of the Cup of trembling, and that to the last drop. O the Justice and Severity of God!

Fifthly and lastly; Consider what the Father of mercies did instead of sparing the Son of his love, and the Text will inform you, *that he delivered him up for us all.* So 'tis noted in *Act. 2. 23.* *Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and with wicked hands have Crucified and Slain.*

There was a Concession or Permission to those wicked Instruments that shed his blood, a loosing of the chain to those Ban-dogs, that compassed him about. Such a Concession as was never given them before, for still they were tyed up from perpetrating their wickedness, but now the restraints of providence are taken away, and he is delivered unto their will, his own Father delivers him into the hands of cruelty. And thus you see wherein the severity of Divine Justice to Christ was manifest.

In the last place, let us see the ground and reason of this rigor and severity to Christ, now there are among others, three special reasons why Christ could not be spared.

The honour of divine justice required that he should suffer the utmost degree of punishment. It was meet that the rights of Heaven should be vindicated to the full, and that the justice of God should have the last Mite it could demand for satisfaction. And this was the special design and aim of God in the sufferings of Christ, as the *Apostle* speaks, *Rom. 3. 25, 26.* It was *to declare his Righteousness*; and lest we should lose the Emphatical word, it is doubled and repeated, *to declare, I say, at this time his Righteousness.* And indeed herein God fully obtained his design: for never was justice so honoured before, to have such a person as the Son of God stand at its Bar, and such a sum as his blood paid down at once for our discharge. So that Justice triumphs as well as mercy, and one Attribute is not rob'd to pay another.

As it was necessary to God's satisfaction, so it was necessary to ours also. If the Lord Jesus had not made full payment to the utmost mite, we could never have had full satisfaction in our Consciences; about that deep and dear concernment of our souls, the remission of sin. Man is a guilty and a suspicious Creature, and hard to be brought to an intire confidence in the pardoning mercy of God. Yea, it is impossible to perswade a convinced Conscience of the possibility of remission, except you can also prove the fulness of divine satisfaction. For Conscience requires as much to satisfie it, as God doth to satisfy him. If God be satisfied, then Conscience can be satisfied too, and securely rest upon that ground; but if there be any doubt of that, there

there is no appeasing of an anxious and jealous Conscience. Greatly therefore hath God consulted our peace in the severity of his Justice to Jesus Christ. *Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep through the blood of the everlasting Covenant,* Heb. 13. 20. Let the words be weighed: He is stiled the *God of peace* when he brought back Christ from the dead. It was incensed justice that put him to death, and appeased justice that brought him back from the dead; and that which pacifies God, is, the only thing in the world that is able to satisfy the Conscience of a Sinner.

3. Therefore did God proceed with such rigor and severity with Jesus Christ, that thereby the demerit and evil of sin might be fully discovered to the world, and an *everlasting caution* left upon all hearts to beware of contracting new guilt. If Justice had descended in a visible form, and hang'd up millions of Sinners in Chains, it had not been such a warning as this against sin. Nay, let me say the grievous and eternal torments that the Damned suffer in Hell, is not such a demonstration of the evil of sin as this is; for those torments are much unknown to men till they feel them, and when they begin to feel them, it is too late to be convinced or cautioned against sin then. But to see such a Person as Christ exposed to the utmost severity of God's wrath for our sin, to see such things done in the green Tree, may well make us cry out, *Lord, what will be done to the dry Tree?* O, the infinite evil of sin! O the inflexible severity of
Divine

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Divine justice ! it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

In a word, hereby Jesus Christ is endeared the more to his people, by suffering such great and hard things in their place, and for their sakes. The extremity of his sufferings for us, commends the strength of his affection to us.

And thus you see the reasons of all this severity to Jesus Christ. God intended the sweetest mercies for you, and therefore prepared the bitterest sufferings for Christ ; from his deep sufferings you may confidently conclude the best of mercies are designed for you, as you will hear in the Prosecuting of the second *Doff.* which for dispatch I Purpose to handle as one Use of this point now before me.

O the admirable and astonishing love of God to us poor worms of the Earth. to deliver up his own Son into the hands of his Enemies, that thirsted for his blood ! long had they been restrained from satisfying their wickedness, and executing their malice till now, and this was the hour which he often spake of ; *My hour is not yet come.* But O, what a dismal hour was it, when it did come ! when providence let loose both Devils and men upon Christ ! deliver'd him over to the will of his Enemies. And this was not all, Christ was not only delivered up into the hands of the worst of men, but which was much more terrible, into the severe hands of Divine Justice, to grapple with the Pure, unmixed, and unallayed wrath of the great and terrible God.

Lastly : We will improve this point in a double Use, by way of Information, and Exhortation.

Use 1. Of Information. The Severity of God's Justice to Jesus Christ, informs us what a dreadful evil sin is, which so incenses the Wrath of God, even against his own Son, when he bare our sins, and stood before the Bar of God as our Surety.

Come hither, hard hearts, (hard indeed, if this cannot break them) you complain you cannot see the evil of sin, so as to be deeply humbled for it; fix your eyes a while here, and intently consider the point in hand: Suppose you saw a tender and pitiful Father come into open Court with fury in his face, to charge his own, his only, and his most beloved Son; and prosecute him to death, and nothing able to satisfy him, but his blood; and be well pleased when he sees it shed: Would you not say, O, what horrid evil hath he done! it must be some deep wrong, some heinous crime that he is guilty of, else it could never be that his own Father could forget his bowels of pity and mercy; yet thus did the Wrath of God break forth against his dear Son, when he stood before the Bar charged as our Surety with the guilt of our sins.

Secondly: Learn hence, what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. Well might Luther cry out, *Nolo Deum absolutum*, Let me have nothing to do with an absolute God. Woe to them that stand before God in their own persons, without Christ; how will Justice handle them! *For if these things were done in the green Tree, what shall be done in the dry Tree? Luke 23. 31.* Did the Son of God fear, tremble, sweat clods of Blood? Did he stand amaz'd, and fall into such an Agony of soul when he drank
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that Cup, which he knew in a few hours he should drink up, and then never taste the bitterness of it more: How sad is their case, that must drink of that Cup for ever, a Cup that hath Eternity to the bottom!

Thirdly: How incomprehensible and ravishing is the love of God to men, that would rather be so severe to Jesus Christ, the darling of his soul, than make us the objects of his Wrath for ever! Which of you (though there be infinitely less tenderness in your hearts than in Gods) would lay your hands upon a Child, the worst Child you have, and put him to death, for the sake of the best Friend you have in the world! But God, with his own hand, delivered his Son, his only Son, that from everlasting was the delight of his soul, who never offended him, to death, the most cursed and cruel death, and all this for Enemies; how unspeakable is this love, and past finding out!

Fourthly: Did not God spare his own Son? then let none of us spare our own sins. Sin was that Sword which pierced Christ: O let sorrow for sin pierce your hearts! if you spare sin, God will not spare you, *Deut. 29. 20.* We spare sin, when we faintly oppose it, when we excuse, cover, and defend it; when we are impatient under just rebukes and reproofs for it; but all kindness to sin, is cruelty to our own souls.

Fifthly and lastly: If God did not spare Christ, certainly he intends to spare Believers for his sake.

The *Surety* could not be spar'd, that the *Principal* might be spar'd for ever. If God had spared him,
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he could not have spared us ; if he afflicts his People, it is not for satisfaction to himself, but profit to us, *Heb. 12. 10.* Should God spare the Rod of Affliction, it would not be for our advantage. So many sanctified Afflictions as are spar'd or abated, so many mercies and spiritual advantages are with-held from us. But as for those strokes of Justice that are the effects of God's Vindictive Wrath, they shall never be felt by Believers for ever. All the Wrath, all the Curse, all the Gall and Wormwood was squeez'd into Christ's Cup, and not one dropt left to imbitter ours.

Use 2. Of Exhortation. Did not God spare his own Son, but give him up to death for us all ? Then possess your hearts fully in the assurance of this great truth, *That the greatest and best of mercies shall not be denied or with-held from you, if you be in Christ.* Lay it down as a sure conclusion of Faith, and build up your hope and comfort upon it. This takes in the second Observation, and surely never was any truth better fortified, never any Inference more strongly inferr'd. Henceforth ye may infer Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal mercies ; all must be yours, if you be Christs, *1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23.* Oh make sure that Christ is yours, and never hesitate at any other mercy : For,

First: God hath certainly a value and esteem for his own Son infinitely above all other things : He is his *own Son*, his dear Son, *Col. 1. 13.* *The Beloved*, *Eph. 1. 6.* *The delight of his soul*, *Isa. 42. 1.* Nothing is valued by God at that rate that Christ is valued. If therefore he spare not the most excel-

lent mercy, but parts with the very darling of his soul for us, how shall he deny or withhold any lesser inferior mercy, It is not to be imagined he is the mercy emphatically so called, *Luke 1. 72.*

Secondly: Jesus Christ is a *Comprehensive mercy*, including all other mercies in himself; he is the Tree of Life, all other mercies are but the Fruits growing on him; he is the *Sun of Righteousness*, and whatever comfort, spiritual or natural, refreshes your souls or bodies, is but a Beam from that Sun, a Stream from that Fountain. If then God part with Christ to you, and for you, he will not withhold other mercies; he will not give the whole Tree, and deny an Apple; bestow the Fountain it self, and deny you the Streams. All spiritual mercies are in him, and given with him, *Ephes. 1. 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* All *Temporals* are in him, and given with him, *Matth. 6. 33.* they are additional to that great mercy.

Thirdly: If God spared not Christ, the best mercy, but delivered him up for us all when we were his *Enemies*, then certainly he will not deny lesser mercies when we are reconciled and made *Friends* to him. And this is the forcible reason of the Apostle, which even compels assent, *Rom. 5. 9. Much more being now justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.* In a word,

Fourthly and lastly: If it were the very design and intention of God in not sparing his own Son, to open thereby a door for all mercies to be let in upon

upon us, then 'tis not imaginable he should withhold them. He will not lose his design, nor lay so many stripes upon Christ in vain: Some shall surely have the benefit of it, and none so capable as Believers.

When God spared not his own Son, this was the design of it, and could you know the thoughts of his heart, they would appear to be such as these.

I will now manifest the *fierceness of my Wrath* to Christ, and the *fulness of my Love* to Believers. The pain shall be his, that the *ease and rest* may be theirs; the stripes his, and the *healing balm* issuing from them theirs. The *Condemnation* his, and the *Justification* theirs. The *Reproach and Shame* his, and the *Honour and Glory* theirs. The *Curse* his, and the *Blessing* theirs. The *Death* his, and the *Life* theirs. The *Vinegar and Gall* his, the *sweet of it* theirs. He shall groan, and they shall triumph; He shall mourn, that they may rejoice: His heart shall be heavy for a time, that theirs may be light and glad for ever. He shall be forsaken, that they may never be forsaken: Out of the worst of miseries to him, shall spring the sweetest of mercies to them. O Grace, Grace, beyond the conception of the largest mind, the expression of the tongues of Angels!

The Seventh Meditation.

UPON

Mark 9. 24. And straight-way the Father of the Child cried, and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.

THE occasion of these words is to be gather'd from the Context; and briefly it was this; A tender Father brings a possessed Child to Christ to be cured with a *Si potes*, a doubting question, *If thou canst do any thing, have compassion upon us, and help us.* Words importing much natural affection and tender love to his Child. Have compassion [upon us] and [help us.] If the Child be sick, the Parent is not well. What touches the Child is felt by his Father.

And as they import his natural affection to his Child, so also, his own spiritual disease, or the weakness of his Faith. His Child was possess'd with a dumb Devil, and himself with unbelieving doubts, and suspicions of Christs ability to cure his Child: The Child had a sick body, and the Father an infirm soul. Satan afflicted one by a possession, and the other by temptation, ver. 22.

Christ returns his doubting language upon himself, v. 23. *If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.* q. d. Dost thou doubt of my ability

bility to heal thy Child? Question rather thy own ability to believe for his cure: If he be not heal'd, the cause will not be in my inability, but in thine own infidelity: Which he speaks not to insinuate that Faith was in his own power, but to convince him of his weakness, and drive him to God for assistance, which effect it obtain'd; for immediately, *he cry'd out and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.*

O how good is it for men to be brought into the streights of affliction sometimes? Had not this man fallen into this distress, it's not like that he had (at least not so soon) arrived either to the sense of his grace or the weakness of it.

In the words we may note these three parts.

First: A profession of his Faith, *Lord, I believe.*

Secondly: A sense of the weakness of his Faith, *Help thou my unbelief.*

Thirdly: The affection with which both were uttered, *He cried out, and said with tears.* If these tears proceeded from the sense and feeling of divine power enabling him to believe, as some think, then they were tears of joy, and would inform us of this great truth.

Doct. 1. *That the least and lowest measure of true Faith is matter of joy unspeakable to the possessor of it.*

If they proceeded from the sense of the weakness of his faith, then they give us this note.

Doct. 2. *That the remainders of unbelief in the people of God, do cost them many tears, they are the burdens and sorrows of gracious souls.*

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Doct. 1. *That the least and lowest measure of Faith, is matter of joy unspeakable to the possessor of it.*

The Apostle in the 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. calls it *precious Faith*, and it well deserves that *Epithet*; for the least and lowest degree of saving Faith is of invaluable excellency, as will appear in these particulars.

First : The least degree of saving faith truly unites the soul to Jesus Christ, and makes it as really a branch or member of him, as *Moses, Abraham, or Paul* were.

All saving Faith receives Christ, *Job.* 1. 12. Indeed the strong Believer receives him with a stronger and steadier hand than the weak one doth, who staggers, doubts, and trembles, but yet receives him, and consequently is as much interested in the blessed privileges flowing from Union, as the greatest Believer in the world. Such is Christ's complacency in our persons and duties, his sympathy with us in our troubles and afflictions, and our interest in his person and purchase. And is not this matter of exceeding joy? Is it not enough to melt, yea, overwhelm the heart of a poor Sinner to discover and feel that in his own heart, which entitles him to such mercies.

Secondly : From the least degree of saving faith we may infer as plenary a remission of sin, as from the strongest. The weakest Believer is as completely Pardoned as the strongest, *Act.* 10. 43. *By him all that believe are justified from all things.* All that believe without difference of sizes, strength, or degrees, the least as well as the greatest, the Believer

ever of a day old, as well as the Fathers and Worthies of greatest name and longest standing.

Loe then the least measure of faith intitles thee as really to the greatest blessing, as the highest acts of faith can do. 'Tis true, the stronger the acting of faith is, the clearer the evidence usually is, but interest in the priviledg is the same in both! If then thou canst discern but the weakest act, and smallest measure of faith in thy soul, hast thou not reason with him in the *Text*, to cry out and say with tears, *Lord I believe?* Canst thou receive and read this pardon, the pardon of such and so many sins, and not wet it with thy tears: O it's matter of joy unspeakable.

Thirdly: The least degree of saving faith infers thy Election of God; and if that be not matter of melting and transporting consideration, nothing is. O, it's matter of more joy, that our names are written in the Book of Life, than that the Devils are subject to us, *Luk. 10. 20.* From hence it may be inferred that we are chosen of God, *Act. 13. 48.* *As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.*

Fourthly: The least measure of saving faith is a mercy greater than most men ever partake of.

'Tis true, God is rich and bountiful in the gifts of Providence to others, they have the good things of this life, many of them more than their hearts can wish, *Psal. 73. 7.* He enricheth many of them also with endowments of the mind, natural and moral knowledge and wisdom, yea, and adorns them with *Homilitical virtues*, that render them very de-

firable and lovely in their converses with men; but there are but few, to whom he gives saving faith, *Isa. 53. 1.* Believers are but a small remnant among men.

Fifthly and lastly: He that hath any, the least degree of saving Faith, hath that which shall never be taken away from him; all other excellencies go away at death, *Job. 4. 21.* But this is a spring that never fails, it springs up into everlasting life, *John 4. 14.* A man may out-live his Friends and Familiars, his Estate and Health, his Gifts and Natural parts, but not his Faith; how great matter of joy and comfort is wrapt up in the least degree of Faith!

Use 1. Of Tryal. It concerns us then to examine our selves, whether our Faith be true, be it more or less, stronger or weaker, and till we discern its truth, it will yield us but little comfort.

I confess, weak Believers are under great disadvantages to comfort, small and weak things being usually very inevident and undiscernable; but yet in this example before us, we find weak Faith was made evident, though much unbelief was mixed with it. *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.* In which words, many very useful signs of true, though weak Faith, did appear, and they are very relieving to weak Believers to consider them. O that we might find the like in us!

First: His Faith gave him a tender melting heart. *He cry'd out, and said with tears.* Dost your Faith melt your hearts, either in the sense of your own vileness, or of the riches of free grace to such vile creatures?

Secondly:

Secondly : His Faith gave him a deep sense of his remaining unbelief, and burdened his heart with it, *Help my unbelief*: And sure so will yours, if it be but as a grain of Mustard-seed in you.

Thirdly : His weak Faith carried him to Christ in fervent prayers and cries for his help to subdue unbelief in him, and so will yours if your Faith be right. Oh how often do the People of God go to the Throne of Grace upon that Errand ! Help, Lord, my heart is dead, vain, and very unbelieving; there's no dealing with it in my own strength: Father, help me.

Fourthly : His Faith made him hunger and thirst after greater measures of it. *Help my unbelief*, (i. e. Lord cure it, that I may believe with more strong and steddy acts of Faith; that I may not question thy power any more, or say, *If thou canst do any thing*. Why thus it will be with you, if you be true Believers, *Luke 17. 5. Lord (said the Disciples) increase our Faith*.

Fifthly : There was a conflict in his soul betwixt Faith and Infidelity, Grace and Corruption; and this very sensible to him, Faith inclining him one way, and Unbelief carrying him another; and hence he speaks like a man greatly distressed betwixt the workings of contrary principles in his own soul, and so you will also find it in your selves, *Gal. 5. 17. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would*.

Use 2. Of Consolation. Well then, bless the Lord for the least degree of saving Faith, and be not so discouraged

discouraged at its imperfections as to over-look and slight the smallest working of Faith in your souls. This poor man was deeply sensible of his unbelief, and yet at the same instant truly thankful for a small measure of Faith. and so should you. For,

First : The least measure of saving Faith is more than all creatures power could produce : 'Tis the Faith of the operation of God, *Col. 2. 12.* 'Tis the work of God that ye believe, *John 6. 29.* Yea, 'tis the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, who believe according to the working of his mighty power, *Eph. 1. 19. 20.* No Ministers of Christ, how excellent soever their gifts are, no duties or ordinances ; no labour or diligence of your own, without this mighty power of God, can ever bring you to Faith.

Secondly : 'Tis just matter of wonder and astonishment, that ever one spark of Faith was kindled in such an heart as thine is ; an heart which had no predisposition or inclination in the least to believe ; yea, it was not *res tabula*, like clean Paper, void of any impression of Faith, but fill'd with contrary impressions to it ; so that 'tis marvelous that ever your hearts received the stamp or impression of Faith on them.

It was wonderful that fire should fall from Heaven, and burn upon the *Altar*, when *Elijah* had laid the wood in order upon it, but much more when he poured so much water upon it, as not only wet all the wood, but fill'd the Trenches, *1 Kings 18. 33.* Just so was the case of thy soul, Reader, when God came to kindle Faith there. Thy heart

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was dark and ignorant, neither acquainted with God or thy own condition; yea, thy heart was a proud heart, full of self-righteousness, and self-conceitedness, *Rom. 3. 17. Rom. 10. 3.* a heart that would rather venture Eternal Damnation, than deny Self, and submit to Christ; and yet the light of the Lord must shine into this darkness, and the pride and stiffness of thy heart must be broken and brought to yield, or there is no believing.

Beside: How many and mighty Enemies did oppose the work of Faith in thy soul? Among which Satan, and thy own carnal reasonings were the principal, *2 Cor. 10. 4.* By them what strong holds and fortifications were raised to secure thee from the strokes of conviction, that make way for Faith. Let but the state of thine own heart, as it was by nature, be considered; and thou wilt say, It was the wonderful work of God that ever thou wast brought in any degree to believe.

Thirdly: Though thy Faith be weak, yet it is growing, if it be saving Faith. The largest Tree was once but a Kernel or Acorn: The most famous Believer at first but a weak and doubting one. Be not discouraged therefore, God will fulfil all the good pleasure of his *goodness* in you, and the work of Faith with power. It were certainly much better for you to be blessing God for a little Faith, praying for the increase of Faith, and diligently attending those means by which it may be improved and made flourishing in your souls, than by a sinful, ungrateful and prejudicial despondency, at once to dishonour God, and thus wrong your selves.

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Doct. 2. *That the remains of unbelief in gracious hearts, do cost them many tears and sorrows.*

There are many things that afflict and grieve the People of God from without, but all their outward troubles are nothing to these troubles that come from within.

There are many inward troubles that make them groan, but none more than this, the unbelief they find in their own hearts. This sin justly costs them more trouble than other sins; because it is the root from which other sins do spring; a root of bitterness bearing wormwood and gall to the imbittering of their souls. For,

First: The remains of unbelief in the Saints greatly dishonour God; and what is a great dishonour to God, cannot but be a great grief and burden to them. For look as faith gives God special honour above all other graces, so unbelief in a special manner, both wrongs and grieves him above all other sins. Unbelief in dominion makes God a liar, 1 Joh. 5. 10. and even the reliques thereof in Believers, doth shake their assent to his truths and promises, and nourishes a vile suspicion of them in the heart; and how do those base jealousies reflect upon his honour? Certainly it cannot but be a grief to a gracious heart to see God dishonoured by others, Psal. 119. 36. and a much greater to dishonour him ourselves, *hinc illæ lachrymæ*. Upon this ground we may justly cry out and say with tears, *Lord, help our unbelief.*

Secondly: The remains of unbelief in the Saints, doth not only dishonour God, but defaces
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and spoils their best duties, in which they at any time approach unto God. Is the face of God clouded from us in Prayer, hearing, or receiving? Examine the cause and reason, and you will find that cloud rais'd from your own unbelieving hearts. Are your affections cold, flat, and dead in duty? dig but to the roor, and you will find this sin to lie there. If the word do not work upon you as you desire and pray it might, 'tis because it is not mingled with faith, *1st. 4. 2.* No Duties, no Ordinances, no Promises can give down their sweet influences upon your souls, because of this sin. Now Communion with the Lord in duties, is the life of our life: These things are dearer to the Saints than their eyes. Justly therefore do they bewail and mourn over that sin, which obstructs and intercepts their sweetest enjoyments in this world.

Thirdly: The remains of unbelief give advantage and success to Satans temptations upon us. Doth he at any time affright and scare us from our duty, or draw and intice us to the commission of sin, or darken and cloud our condition, and fill us with inward fears and horror, without cause? all this he doth by the mediation of our own unbelief. The Apostle in *Eph. 6. 16.* calls Faith the souls Shield against temptation: And *1 Job. 5. 4.* 'tis call'd the victory by which we overcome, (*i. e.*) the Sword or Weapon by which we Achieve our Victories: And if so, then unbelief disarms us both of Sword and Shield, and leaves us naked of defence in the day of Battel, a prey to the next temptation that befalls us.

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Fourthly: The remains of unbelief hinder the thriving of all graces; it's a worm at their root; a plant of such a malignant quality, that nothing which is spiritual can thrive under the droppings and shadow of it. It's said *Heb. 4. 2.* that the Gospel was Preached to the *Israelites*, but it did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. No Ordinances nor Duties, be they never so excellent, will make that soul to thrive, where unbelief prevails: You Pray, you Hear, you Fast, you Meditate, and yet you do not thrive, your spiritual food doth no good: You come from Ordinances as dead, careless, and vain as you went to them; and why is it thus, but because of remaining unbelief?

Use 1. Let all the People of God bewail and tenderly mourn over the remainders of infidelity in their own hearts. There, there is the root of the disease; and surely, *Reader*, thy heart is not free of such symptoms of it, as appear in other mens hearts. For do but consider,

Symp. 1. What is our Impatiency to wait for mercy, and despondency of spirit, if deliverance come not quickly in the outward or inward streights of soul or body, but a plain symptom of unbelief in our hearts? *He that believes, will not make haste, Isa. 28. 16.* He that can believe, can also wait Gods time, *Psal. 27. 14.*

Symp. 2. And what doth our readiness to use sinful mediums to prevent, or extricate our selves out of trouble, but a great deal of Infidelity lurking still in our hearts? Might but Faith be heard to speak,

Speak, it would say in thy heart, let me rather die ten deaths than commit one sin. It's sweeter and easier to die in my integrity, than to live with a defiled or wounded Conscience. 'Tis nothing but our unbelief that makes us so ready to put forth our hands to iniquity, when the rod of the Wicked rests long upon us, or any eminent danger threatens us, *Psal. 125. 3.*

Sympt. 3. Doth not the unbelief of your hearts shew it self in your deeper thoughtfulness and great anxieties about earthly things, *Matth. 6. 30.* We pretend we have trusted God with our souls to all Eternity, and yet cannot trust him for our daily bread. We bring the evils of to morrow upon to day; and all because we cannot believe more.

O Reader! How much better were it to hear such questions as these from thee; how shall I get an heart suitable to the mercies I do enjoy? How shall I duely improve them for God? What shall I render to the Lord for all his goodness? This would better become thee, than to afflict thy self with, What shall I eat, what shall I drink, or where-withal shall I be clothed?

Sympt. 4. What doth the slavish fear of death speak, but remains of unbelief still in our hearts? Are there not many faintings, tremblings, despondencies of mind under the thoughts of death? O! if faith were high, thy spirit could not be so low, *2 Cor. 5. 1, 2, 3.* The more bondage of fear, the more infidelity.

Sympt. 5. To conclude, What is the voice of all those distractions of thy heart in religious duties,

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but want of faith, weakness in faith, and the actual prevalence of unbelief? You come to God in prayer, and there a thousand Vanities beset you; your heart is carried away, it roves, it wanders, to the ends of the earth: Conscience smites for this, and faith, Thou dost but mock God, thy soul will smart for this; thou seekest neither strength nor sweetness arising out of such duties. You enquire for Remedies, and fill the ears of Friends with your complaints, and it may be see not the root of all this to be in your own unbelief: But there it is, and till that be cured, it will not be better with you.

Use. 2. Yet let not poor Christians so mourn as those that have no hope or ground of comfort, even in this case: For,

First: Though there be remains of unbelief in you, yet you have infinite cause to bless God that they are but remains. You once were in unbelief, *1 Tim. I. 13.* (i. e.) under the full power and dominion of it. Had God cut you off in that state, you must certainly have perished. This is the *disease*, but that was the *death* of your souls.

Secondly: Though unbelief be in you, yet it is not in you *per modum quietis*, by way of rest, as it is in all unbelievers, but by way of daily conflict, and as a burden too heavy to be born. Now, though the sin be *sad*, yet the sorrow for it is *sweet*; and your conflicts with it brings you under a very comfortable sign of grace, *Rom. 7. 21.*

Thirdly: This is a disease under which all Christians do labour more or less. There is not a heart so holy in all the world, but is in some degree tainted

ed and infected with this disease. And this hath been evident, not only in all Christians of all sizes, but in all the acts of their faith. *Jobs* faith triumphed in *cap.* 13. 15. yet had its eclipse and fainting fit, in *cap.* 19. 20. *Abraham* was a most renowned Believer, a great pattern and example of Faith; oh! how high a pitch did his faith mount to, in *Gen.* 22. 3. and yet there was a time when it fainted, and failed him, as at *Gerar*, *Gen.* 20. 2, 9, 10, 11. *David* in *Psal.* 27. 1, 23. was not like *David* in *1 Sam.* 27. 1. The faith of *Peter* shone out like the Sun in a glorious confession, *Matth.* 16. 16. and yet was not only beclouded, but seemed to be gone down and quite set in *Matth.* 26. 69. though it afterwards recovered it self.

Fourthly: 'Tis not this or that degree of unbelief that damns a man, but the power and dominion of it that damns him. Indeed your comfort much depends upon the strength of your faith, but your salvation depends upon the truth of it. Most Christians come to Heaven with a weak and doubting faith, but few with their sails fill'd with direct and fresh wind of assurance.

Fifthly: There is enough in Christ to help thy unbelief. Lord, said this poor man, *help my unbelief*. He is an excellent *Physitian*, and knows how to relieve and cure thee: Go to him and groan out thy complaint, tell him thy heart is pained and troubled with this disease; thou shalt find him a faithful, skilful and merciful Saviour.

Sixthly: It's but a little while before this, with all other diseases bred by it in thy soul, shall be per-

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fectly healed; Sanctification is a cure begun, Glorification is the cure performed and compleated: The former hath destroy'd the *dominion*, the latter will destroy the *existence* of it in thy soul: When you come to Heaven, and never till then will you find your selves well, and at ease in every part.

And thus much of the second point.

There are some general observations arising from both parts of my Text, considered together, *viz.* The thankful acknowledgment of his faith, and the sorrowful sense of his unbelief. It shall suffice for a conclusion to this Meditation only to note them; and they are these:

First: That the deepest sense of sin must not exclude an humble and thankful acknowledgment of the grace of God in his People. 'Tis the fault of most to hide their sins, and the fault of some to hide their graces.

Secondly: Acceptance of our persons and duties is a pure act of grace. There's no duty performed in a perfect act of faith; all is mixt with unbelief in some degree, the Honey and the Comb are mixt together, *Cant.* 2. 8. No duty as it comes from us is pure.

Thirdly: Justly may we suspect that faith for a false faith, which boasts of its own strength, but never mourns in the sense of unbelief. Where there are no conflicts with sin, there can be no sound evidence of sincerity.

Fourthly: Believers must not wonder to find strange vicissitudes and alterations in the state of their

their souls. Sometimes a clear, and sometimes a cloudy day. Sometimes they have their Songs in the night, and sometimes their bitter Lamentations. If you ask, Why is it thus? the answer is, there are twins within you, contrary principles struggling in your souls, and it is no wonder at all to find peace and trouble, hope and fear, light and darkness, taking their turns, and sharing your time betwixt them.

The Eighth Meditation.

U P O N

Psal. 40. 8. I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea thy Law is within my heart.

Casting my eye upon this precious Text, I find it perplexed and darkned with variety, yea, contrariety of expositions. The *Jews* and *Socinians* generally refer all to *David*, denying *Christ* to be the person here spoken of. Others refer the whole *Psalms* to *Christ*, but the best expositors refer it partly to *David*, and partly to *Christ*. That this *Paragraph* in which my Text lies, refers to *Christ*, is plain from the *Apostles* allegation of it, in *Heb. 10. 5, 6, 7*. In this and the two former ver-

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ses there lie three great points of truth, which you may take up in this order.

First the insufficiency and rejection of all legal Sacrifices, as things of no vertue in themselves to satisfie God, or save men, *ver. 6.* these thou *wouldst not* (i.e.) thou never didst appoint them to be the means of salvation farther than they signified and pointed at me; and now must vanish when I come in a body of flesh, according to that, *Col. 2. 17.*

Secondly: The introduction of a compleat and sufficient means of redemption, *ver. 7.* *Loe I come.*

Thirdly: The suitableness and agreeableness of this work of redemption to the heart and will of Jesus Christ, *vers. 8.* I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy Law is within my heart; or as it is in the Hebrew, *in the midst of my bowels.*

In the words we are to note two things, *viz.* First, The rise and spring of mans redemption.

Secondly: The acceptableness and suitableness of it to the heart of Christ.

First: The rise and First spring of mans redemption, the will and pleasure of God. So it pleased the Lord to appoint and order it, that a remnant of poor lost Sinners should be saved.

The execution and accomplishment of this good pleasure of God, was that part which by agreement and consent was committed to the Son, and is here call'd a Law, or command laid upon him. And answerably the death of Christ is represented as an act of obedience, *Phil. 2. 8.* and respected Gods

com-

command for it, *Joh. 10. 18: This commandment have I received from my Father*, referring to the Covenant of redemption, which was betwixt them from everlasting; and this was the rise and first spring of our Redemption by Christ.

Secondly: You have here the gratefulness and suitableness of this work to the heart of Christ. *I delight to do it, it is in my heart. Loe, I come.*

The Hebrew words note not simple consent or willingness, but the highest pleasure and complacency that can be; a work which ravishes his soul with the delights of it. *I delight to do thy will.* And that other expression, *Thy law is within my heart*, or bowels: hath as deep a sense and signification, as the former. It notes the greatest care, sollicitude and intention of mind, in keeping the most precious treasure that was committed to him, for so the phrase is used in *Prov. 4. 21.* And so did our Redeemer esteem and reckon this work which was by the Father demanded and committed to him. Hence the note is,

Doct. *That the will of God to redeem sinners by the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ, was most grateful and pleasing to the very heart of Christ.*

It is said, *Prov. 8. 31.* when he was solacing himself in the sweetest enjoyment of his Father, whilst he lay in that blessed bosom of delights, yet the very prospect of this work gave him pleasure: Then were *his delights with the Sons of men.* And when he was come into the world, and had endured many abuses and injuries, and was even now come

to the most difficult part of the work ; yet, *how am I streightned, or pained (saith he) till it be accomplished,* Luk. 12. 50.

Two things call our thoughts to stay upon them in this point.

First : The decency of it, why it ought to be so.

Secondly : The reasons of it, whence it came to be so.

First: Why it ought to be a pleasant and grateful thing to Christ to take a body of flesh, and lay it down by death again for the redemption of Sinners.

First : It became Christ to go about this work with chearfulness and delight, that thereby he might give his death the nature and formality of a sacrifice.

In all Sacrifices you shall find that God had still a regard, a special respect to the will of the offerer. See *Exod. 35. 5. 21. & Levit. 1. 3.* the voluntariness and chearfulness with which it is given, is of great regard with God.

Secondly : It ought to be so, in regard of the unity of Christs will with the Fathers. The work of our redemption is call'd, *the pleasure of the Lord,* Isa. 53. 10. And what was the Fathers pleasure, could not be displeasing to him, who is one with the Father. It's impossible their wills can clash, whose nature is one.

Thirdly : This was necessary to magnifie and commend the love of Jesus Christ to us, for whom he gave himself. That he came into the world to die

die for us, is a mercy of the first magnitude, but that he came in love to our souls, and underwent all his sufferings with such willingness for our sakes, this heightens it above all apprehension. O this is the most taking, the most ravishing, the most astonishing consideration of all: *He loved me, and gave himself for me, Gal. 2. 20. He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, Rev. 1. 5.* Here love is in its highest exaltation.

Fourthly: It was necessary to be so, for the regulating of all our obedience to God according to this pattern. That seeing and setting this great example of obedience before us, we might never grudge nor grumble at any duty or suffering that God should call us to, *You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor:* Saith the Apostle, when he would press the Corinthians to their duty, *2 Cor. 8. 9.* And when he would effectually urge the Philippians to their duty; this is the argument, *Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus, Phil. 2. 5.* So that it became and behoved Christ thus to undertake this great service.

Secondly; Next let us consider and examine whence it came to be so pleasant and acceptable to Jesus Christ to come into the world and die for poor Sinners.

And we shall find, that although the sufferings of Christ were exceeding sharp, and the cup of Gods wrath unspeakably bitter; yet that which made it pleasant and desirable to Jesus Christ was the prospect he had of the sweet results and issues of his

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his sufferings, *Iſa.* 53. 10, 11. *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied, (ie) he shall have great content and pleasure from the issues and fruits of his sufferings, as Psal.* 128. 2. *Thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands, (ie) the fruit of thy labours.* So here, *He shall see the travail of his soul, (ie) the fruit and effects of his travail; and to see this, shall be to him the reward and recompence of all his sufferings.* Now among the sweet results of the sufferings of Christ, there are especially these three which he fore-saw with singular content and delectation.

First: That in his sufferings there would be made a glorious display and manifestation of the divine Attributes; yea, such a glorious display of them as never was made before to *Angels* or to *men*, nor ever shall be any more in this world. For though,

First: The *Wisdom* of God had made it self visible to men in the creation of the world, yet there it shone but in a faint and languishing beam, compared with this. Here divine *Wisdom* put it self as it were into a visible form, and represented it self to the life. See *1 Cor.* 1. 24. and *Eph.* 3. 10. Behold in the death of Christ the *Wisdom* of God in its highest exaltation and glory. O the manifold *Wisdom* of God! O the depth of his unsearchable wisdom! Which I touched in some particulars before, *p.* 102.

Behold here the *Wisdom* of God raising more glory to himself by occasion of the breach of the Law, than could ever have risen to him from the
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most punctual *observation* of its commands, or the most rigorous *execution* of its threatnings; from the occasion of the fall (which was our undoing) raising us to a far better estate, and with a much better security to enjoy it than that from which we fell. Yea, behold and wonder, God by the death of Christ, recovering his Elect from all the danger and mischief of sin, and yet making the way and manner of their recovery the fairest glass to represent the horror and evil of sin to them, that ever was shewn them in this world. Oh, the triumph of divine Wisdom!

Secondly: Though the *love* of God had appeared before in our Creation, Protection and Provision, yet nothing to what it doth in our Redemption by the death of Christ: Loe, here is the love of God in its strength and glory, 1 *Joh. 4. 10* *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins.* Herein is love (i. e.) here is the highest expression of Gods love to the Creature; not only that ever was, but that ever can be made; for in love only God acteth to the uttermost: Whatever his power hath done, it can do more; but for his love it can go no higher; he hath no greater thing to give than *his Christ*. 'Tis true, in giving us a being, and that in the noblest rank and order of Creatures on Earth; herein was love. In feeding us all our life long, by his assiduous tender providence; herein is love. In protecting us under his wings from innumerable dangers and mischiefs; herein is love, much love: And yet set all this by his *Redeeming love* in Christ
O and,

and it seems nothing. When we have said all, *Herein is the love of God, that he sent his Son, &c.* This was free love to undeserving, to ill deserving Sinners. Preventing love; not that we loved him, but that he loved us. Just as an image in the glass (saith *Ficinus*) that is imprinted there by the face looking into it. the Image does not look back upon the face, except the face look forward upon the Image; and in that the Image does seem to see the face, its nothing else, but that the face does see the Image. O, the unexpressable glory of the love of God in Christ!

Thirdly: Though God had given several sad marks of his Justice before, both upon the *Angels* that fell, clapping upon them the chains of darkness, in the overthrow of *Sodom*, and the neighbouring *Cities*, turning them to ashes; as you may read in *Jud.* ver. 6, 7. yet never was the exactness and severity of Justice so manifested before, nor ever shall be any more, as it was at the death of Christ. Christ did not only satisfy it fully, but he also honoured it highly, making that Attribute which was once a *bar*, now to be a *bottom* of our peace, *Rom.* 3. 25. Never did such a person as Christ stand at the Bar of Justice before: The Blood of God was poured out to appease and satisfy it. When Christ suffered, he did both give and take satisfaction; he gave it to the Justice of God in dying; he took it in seeing Justice so honoured in his death.

Secondly: Another delightful prospect Christ had of the fruit of his sufferings, was the recovery
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and salvation of all the Elect by his death. And though his sufferings were exceeding bitter, yet such fruit of them as this, was exceeding sweet. Upon this account he assumed his name Jesus, *Matth.* 1. 21. yea, and his humane Nature also, *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. Souls are of great value in his eyes: One soul is of more worth in his account than all the world, *Mark.* 8. 36. What a pleasure then must it be to him, to save so many souls from the everlasting wrath of the great and terrible God? Add to this,

Thirdly: The glory which would redound to him from his redeemed ones to all Eternity. For it will be the everlasting pleasant employment of the Saints in Heaven to be ascribing glory, praise, and honour to the redeemer. *To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests to God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Rev.* 1. 5, 6. The improvement of all this will be in a word or two.

Use. 1. For Conviction. This truth then in the first place, may convince, shame, and humble the very best of Christians, who find so little delight in the most easie, sweet, and spiritual duties of obedience; when Christ undertook and went through the most difficult task for them with such chearfulness and readiness. *Loe I come, thy Law is in my heart, I delight to do thy will.* And yet the work he so applied himself to, was a work full of difficulty, attended with reproach and shame, as well as anguish and pain.

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Did Christ find pleasure in abasement, and torment, in suffering and dying for me? and can I find no pleasure in Praying, Hearing, Meditating, and enjoying the sweet duties of communion with him? Did he come so chearfully to Die for me? and do I go so dead-heartedly to prayers and Sacraments to enjoy fellowship with him? Was it a pleasure to him to shed his blood? and is it none to me to apply it, and reap the benefits of it? Oh Lord, what an heart have I? How unsuitable is this frame of heart to the Nature of God, whose essential excellencies make him the supream delight, the sweet repose, solace, and rest of souls! *Psal.* 16. 11.

How unsuitable to the principles of regeneration and holiness purposely planted in the soul, to make spiritual performances a pleasure to it!

How unsuitable to the future expected state of glory, which brings the sanctified soul to a sweet complacential rest and satisfaction in God! In a word, how unsuitable is this temper of spirit to the heart of Jesus Christ! O, methinks I hear Christ thus expostulating with me this day:

Is this thy zeal and thy delight in the duties of obedience? Is it rather the awe of Conscience than the pleasure of Communion that brings thee to this duty? Doth thy heart need so many arguments to perswade it even to the sweetest, easiest, and most pleasant duties in Religion? Well, I did not love thee at that rate; my heart readily eccho'd to the Fathers call to die for thee, to drink the very dregs of the cup of trembling for thee. I come, I come.

I delight to do thy will, thy law is in the midst of
of my bowels.

a. *Use for Exhortation.* If it be so, how great a
motive have the People of God before them, to
make them apply themselves with all chearfulness
and readiness of mind to all the duties of active and
passive obedience? O let there be no more grumb-
lings, lazy excuses, shiftings of duty, or dead-
hearted and listless performances of them after such
an example as this. Be ready to do the will of
God; yea, be you also ready to suffer it. Let the
same mind be in you, which also was in Christ
Jesus. The more pleasure and delight you find in
doing or suffering the will of God, the more of
Christ's spirit is in you, and the more of his Image
is upon you. Are not all holy duties expressed in
Scripture by the Saints walking with God? *Gen.*
17. 1. and is not this an Angelical life? Can it be
a burden to the ear to hear sweet ravishing strains
of melody; or to the eye, to behold variety of
pleasant and lively colours; or to the palate to re-
lish the delicious sweetness of meats and drinks?

Oh Reader! were thy heart more spiritual,
more deeply sanctified, and Heavenly, it would
be no more pain to thee to Pray, Hear, or Medi-
tate on the things of God, than it is to a Bird to
carry and use his own wings; or to a Man, to eat
the most pleasant food when he is an hungry. I
have rejoiced (saith David) in the way of thy Command-
ments, as much as in all riches, *Psal. 119. 11.*

And as to sufferings for Christ, they should not
be grievous to Christians, that know how chearful-

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ly Christ came from the bosom of the Father to die for them. What have we to leave, or lose, in comparison with him? What are our sufferings to Christs? Alas there is no compare; there was more bitterness in one drop of his sufferings, than in a sea of ours.

To conclude, your delight and readiness in the paths of obedience, is the very measure of your sanctification.

The Ninth Meditation.

UPON

Zeck. 12. part of ver. 10. And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born.

THIS promise is confessed to have a special respect to the *Jews* Conversion to Christ. It was in part accomplished in the *Apostles* days, *Acts. 2. 37.* yet that was but a specimen or hand-sel of what shall be, when the body of that Nation shall be called.

But yet it cannot be denied that all Christians find the same piercing sorrows, and wounding sense of sin :

sin: when God awakens them by convictions, and brings them to see the evil of sin and the grace of Christ, that is here exprest concerning them at their conversion.

The words present us with three very remarkable particulars in Evangelical repentance, viz. First: The spring and principle of it. Secondly: The effects and fruits of it. Thirdly: The depth and measure of it.

First: The spring and principle of Repentance exprest in these words, *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.* This looking upon Christ, is an act of faith, for so it is described in Scripture, *Joh. 6. 40. Isa. 45. 22.* and it respects Christ crucified as its proper object; yea, and that by them, not only as their Progenitors involved them in that guilt, by entailing it on them, but as their own sins were the meritorious cause of his death and sufferings. *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.*

Secondly: The effects and fruits of such an aspect of faith upon Christ is here also noted. *They shall mourn and be in bitterness,* (i. e.) it shall melt and thaw them into Godly sorrow; it shall break their hard and stony hearts to pieces: The eye of faith shall affect their hearts; for indeed Evangelical sorrows, are hearty and undissembled tears dropping out of the eye of faith.

Thirdly and lastly: The depth and measure of their sorrow is here likewise noted. And it is compared with the greatest and most piercing sorrows men are acquainted with in this world, even the sorrow of a tender-hearted Father mourning over a

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dead Son, yea, an only Son, and his first born, than, which no earthly sorrow is more penetrating and sharp, *Jer. 6. 26.* Hence the note will be,

Dock. That the sufferings of Christ are exceeding powerful, to melt Believers hearts into Godly sorrow.

The eye of faith is a precious eye, and according to its various Aspects upon Christ, it produceth various effects upon the hearts of men. Eying Christ as our compleat *Righteousness*, so it pacifies and quiets the heart: eying him as our pattern, so it directs and regulates our actions; eying him as our sacrifice, offer'd up to divine Justice for our sins, so it powerfully thaws the heart, and melts the affections.

By meltings, I do not only understand tears, as if they only were expressive of all spiritual sorrow; for it is possible the waters of sorrow may run deep in the heart, when the eye cannot yield a drop.

There be two things in Repentance, *Trouble and Tears.* The first is *Essential*, The last *Contingent*. The first flows from the influence of faith upon the soul; the last much depends upon the temper and constitution of the body. It is a mercy when our tears can flow from an heart fill'd with sorrow for sin, and love to Christ; and yet it often falls out that there is an heavy heart, where the eyes are dry. But that there is efficacy in faith to melt the heart, by looking upon the sufferings of Christ for sin, is undoubted; and how it becomes so powerful an instrument to this end, I will shew you in the following particulars.

First: Faith eyes the dignity of the person of Christ,

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Christ, who was pierced for us ; how excellent and glorious a person he is. In the captivity, it was for a lamentation that *Princes were hanged up by the hands, and the faces of Elders were not revered*, Lam. 3. 12. We read also the Lamentation of David, 2 Sam. 3. 38. as he followed *Abner's* Herse. *A Prince and a great man is fallen in Israel to day.*

But what was *Abner*, and what were the *Princes of Israel* to the Son of God? Loe here by faith the Believer sees the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, the only begotten of the Father, equal to God in nature and dignity, he whom all the *Angels* worship, hanging dead upon the cursed Tree. Faith sees Royal Blood, the Blood of God poured out by the sword of Justice for satisfaction and reconciliation; and this cannot but deeply affect the believing soul.

Secondly: Faith represents the severity of Divine Justice to Jesus Christ, and the extremity of his sufferings; and this sight is a melting sight.

The Apostle tells us, Gal. 3. 13. he was made *κατάρα*, a Curse, and Execration for us: It relates to the kind and manner of his death upon the Cross, which was the death of a *Slave, servile supplicium*; a free man was priviledg'd from that punishment. It looks upon, and well considers the sad plight and condition Christ was in, in the days of his Humiliation for us. It's said of him, Matth. 26. 38. he was *Πένυλος*, *undequaque tristis*, surrounded with griefs, exactly answerable to his name, Isa. 53. 3. *a man of sorrows*. Let him look which way he would, outward or inward, upward or downward,

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ward, to Friends or Enemies, he could behold nothing but sorrow, and what might increase his misery. Another *Evangelist* saith he was *fore amazed*, Mark. 14. 33. Ἐκθαμβήσας. It notes such a consternation as makes the hair of the head stand upright, *horripilatio*. A third tells us his *soul was troubled*, Joh. 12. 27. ἡ ψυχὴ μὲ τεταράχται, *Unde Tartarus*, a word from whence Hell is derived, and denoting the anguish and troubles of them that are in that place of torments.

And the fourth tells us he was in an *Agony*, Luk. 23. 44. all expressing in several emphatical notions and metaphors, the extremity of Christs anguish and torment. This cannot but greatly affect and break the Believers heart.

Thirdly: But then that which most affects the heart, is Christs Undergoing all this, not only in *love* to us, but in our *room* and *stead*. He suffered not for any evil he had done, for there was no guile found in his mouth, *Isa.* 53. 4, 5. *1 Pet.* 3. 18. It was for me, a vile, wretched, worthless Sinner. It was my Pride, my Earthliness, the hardness of my heart, the corruption of my nature, the innumerable evils of my life, that brought him down to the dust of death. *He was made sin for us, who knew no sin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

Who can believably eye Christ, as suffering such pains, such wrath, such a curse, in the room of such a Sinner, such a Rebel; so undeserving, and so ill deserving a Creature, and not mourn as for an only Son, and be in bitterness as for a first-born?

Fourthly :

Fourthly : Faith melts the heart by considering the effects and fruits of the sufferings of Christ, what great things he hath purchased by his Stripes and blood for poor Sinners ; a full and final pardon of sin, a well-settled peace with God, a sure title and right to the eternal Inheritance ; and all this for thee, a Law-condemned, a Self-condemned Sinner. Lord, what am I, that such mercies as these should be purchased by such a price for me ? for me, when thousands and ten thousands of sweeter dispositions must burn in Hell for ever ! Oh, what manner of love is this !

Fifthly : Faith melts the heart by exerting a threefold act upon Christ Crucified.

First : *A realizing Act*, representing all this in the greatest certainty and evidence that can be. These are no *devised fables*, but the sure and infallible reports of the Gospel.

Secondly : An *applying Act* ; he loved me, and gave himself for me, *Gal. 2. 20.* He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own Blood, *Rev. 1. 5.*

Thirdly and lastly : By an *Inferring or reasoning Act*. If Christ died for me, then I shall never die : If his Blood were paid down for me, then my sins which are many, are forgiven me. If he was Condemned in my room, I am acquitted, and shall be saved from wrath to come, through him. O how weighty do these thoughts prove to believing souls !

1. *Use for information.* Then sure there is but little faith, because there is so much deadness and unaffectedness
among

among Professors. A believing sight of Christ will work upon a gracious heart, as a dead Son, a beloved and only Son, uses to do upon a tender Father's heart.

Reader, was it ever thy sad lot to look upon such an heart-rending object? Didst thou ever feel the pangs and commotions in thy bowels that some have felt upon such a sight? Why so will thy heart work towards Christ, if ever thou believably look'st on him whom thou hast pierced.

Infer. 2. Then the acting and exercising of faith is the best expedient to get a tender heart, and raise the dead affections.

We are generally full of complaints, how hard, how dead and stupid our hearts are; we are often putting such cases as these, How shall I get a broken heart for sin? How shall I raise my dead heart in duty? Why this is the way; no expedient in all the world like this. Look upon him whom thou hast pierced. 'Tis the melting Argument.

2. *Use of Examination.* But that which I especially aim at in this point, is for the tryal and examination of thy heart, Reader, in the point of true *Evangelical Repentance*, which is thy proper business at this time: And I will go no further than the Text for rules to examine and try it by.

Rule. 1. All Evangelical Repentance hath a supernatural spring, *I will pour out the spirit of grace*, and they shall mourn. Till the spirit be poured out upon us, it is as easie to press water out of a Rock, as to make our hearts relent and mourn. There are indeed natural meltings the effects of an

ingenuous Temper, but these differ, in kind and nature, from Godly sorrow.

Rule. 2. Godly sorrows are real, sincere, and undissembled. They shall mourn *as for an only Son*. Parents need not the help of an *Onion* to draw tears on such accounts: O! their very hearts are pierced; they could even die with them. Sighs, groans, and tears are not hang'd out as false signs of what is not to be found in their hearts.

Rule 3. Evangelical sorrow is very deep; so much the mourning for an only Son, a first-born, must import. These waters, how still soever they be, run deep, very deep, in the bottom channel of the soul. See *Acts 2. 27. They were cut to the heart.*

Rule 4. Faith is the instrument employed in breaking the heart. *They shall look and mourn.* This is the Burning glass that contracts the beams, and fires the affections.

Rule 5. Lastly: The wrong sin hath done to God, and the sufferings it hath brought Christ under, are the piercing and heart-wounding considerations. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn. The piercing of Christ by our sin, is that must pierce thy soul with sorrow:

The Tenth Meditation.

UPON

John 6. ver. 55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

IN this context our Lord Jesus Christ makes a most spiritual and excellent discourse to the Jews, about the nature and necessity of faith in him, taking the occasion thereof from the Bread, which a little before he had so miraculously multiplied, and fed them with, raising up their minds to more sublime and spiritual things, & letting them know that Bread, how sweet soever it was, was but a shadow of himself, infinitely more sweet & necessary.

These words are a *proposition*, in which are these three things observable.

First : The *Subject*, my Flesh and my Blood.

Secondly : The *Predicate*, it is Meat and Drink.

Thirdly : The *manner of Predication*, it's *Meat indeed, and Drink indeed.*

First : The *Subject*, my *Flesh*, and my *Blood*, (i. e.) My Humanity ; this is meat and drink, true spiritual food. If it be demanded why he had not said, I am meat and drink indeed ; but rather chuses to say, my flesh and blood is so ; the reason is evident, saith Learned *Camero*, because if you take away Flesh and Blood from Christ, he cannot be Food or Life to us. For in order to his being so, he must satisfie God for us, and obtain the

the Remission of our sins ; but without shedding of Blood there is no Remission. Now for as much as by the offering up of his Body, and shedding of his Blood, he hath obtained pardon and life for us ; therefore his Flesh and Blood is call'd our Meat and our Drink, that by which our souls live. Which brings us to the second thing.

Secondly : The *Predicate*, it is meat and drink, (*i. e.*) it is to our souls of the same Use and Necessity that meat and drink is to our natural life which cannot be sustained or continued without them.

The life of our souls as necessarily depends upon the Flesh and Blood of Christ, as our natural life doth upon meat and drink. Yet beware of a mistake here ; the Flesh and Blood, or the Humanity of Christ is not the *Fountain* of our spiritual life, but the *Channel* rather, through which it flows to us from his *Divinity*. By reason of his Incarnation and Death, Righteousness and Life comes to us.

Thirdly : The manner of *Predication* is very *Emphatical*, it is meat *indeed*, and drink *indeed* ; which notes two things.

First : *Reality*, in opposition to all legal shadows and types.

Secondly : *Transcendent excellency*, far surpassing all other food, even *Mannah* it self, which for its excellency is styled *Angels food*. My Flesh is meat indeed (*i. e.*) true, substantial, and real food to souls, and choice excellent and incomparable food. Hence observe,

Doct. That what meat and drink is to our bodies, that, and much more than that, the Flesh and Blood of Christ is to believing souls.

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Two things require explication in this point. First; Wherein the resemblance or agreement lies betwixt the Flesh and Blood of Christ, and Meat and Drink Secondly: Wherein the former transcends and excels the latter.

I. *Query.* Wherein lies the resemblance and agreement betwixt the Flesh and Blood of Christ, and material Meat and Drink?

Sol. The agreement is manifest in the following particulars.

First: Meat and Drink is necessary to support Natural life, we cannot live without it. Upon this account bread is call'd the *staff and stay*, (i. e.) the support of the natural spirits which do as much lean and depend upon it, as a feeble man doth upon his staff, *Isa.* 3. 1. But yet how necessary soever it be. the Flesh and Blood of Christ is more indispensibly necessary for the life of our souls, *Joh.* 6. 53. *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink his Blood, ye have no life in you.* Our souls have more absolute need of peace and pardon by Christ, than our bodies have of meat and Drink. Better our bodies were starved and famished, than our souls damned and lost for ever.

Secondly; Meat and drink are ever most sweet and desirable to those that are hungry and thirsty. It is hunger and thirst that gives value and estimation to meat and drink, *Prov.* 27. 7. *To the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet;* and so it is in our esteem of Christ, *Joh.* 7. 37. *If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.* When God by illumination and conviction makes men deeply sensible of their miserable

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miserable lost, and perishing condition, then ten thousand worlds for a Christ. All is but dung and dross in comparison of the excellency of Christ Jesus.

Thirdly : Meat and drink must undergo an *alteration*, and lose its own *form* before it actually nourishes the body. The Corn is ground to pieces in the mill, before it be made bread to nourish us. And Christ must be ground betwixt the upper and neither millstones of the wrath of God, and malice of men, to be made bread for our souls. The Prophet saith, *Isa. 52. 14. His Visage was marr'd more than any mans.* He did not look like himself, the beauty and glory of Heaven, but the reproach of Men, and despised of the People. Oh what an alteration did his Incarnation and Sufferings make upon him! *Phil. 2. 6, 7. Quantum mutatus ab illo?*

Fourthly ; Natural food must be received into our bodies, and have a *Natural Union* with them ; and Christ must be received into our souls, and have a *spiritual Union* with them by faith, or else we can have no nourishment or benefit by him. An empty profession, a meer talkative religion nourishes the inner man just as much as the sight of meat, and our commending of it, doth our outward man. It's Christ's dwelling in our hearts by faith, *Eph. 3. 17.* our receiving of him, *Joh. 1. 12.* our eating his Flesh and drinking his blood, *Joh. 6. 53.* (i.e.) the effectual application of Christ to our souls by faith, that makes us partakers of his benefits.

Fifthly : Meat and drink must be taken every

day, or else natural life will languish, and spiritual life will never be comfortably maintain'd in us without daily communion with Jesus Christ: If a gracious soul neglect or be interrupted in its course of duties, and stated times of prayer, it will be quickly discernable by the Christian himself in the deadness of his own heart, and by others also, in the barrenness of his discourses. And in these things stands the Analogy and agreement of the Flesh and Blood of Christ with meat and drink.

2. *Query.* The next thing is to open the transcendent excellency of Christs Flesh and Blood, above all other food in the world; and this appears in four particulars.

First: This Flesh and Blood was assumed into the nearest Union with the second Person in the blessed *Trinity*, and so is not only dignified above all other created Beings, but becomes the *first receptacle* of all grace intended to be communicated through it to the children of men, *Job. 1. 14.*

Secondly: This Flesh and blood of Christ was offered up to God as the great Sacrifice for our sins, and Purchase of our peace, *Col. 1. 20. Eph. 5. 2.* and so it is of inestimable price and value to Believers. The humane Nature of Christ was the *Sacrifice*, the divine Nature was the *Altar* on which it was offered up, and by which it was dignified and sanctified, and made an offering of a sweet smelling favour to God, *Eph. 5. 2.*

Thirdly: This Flesh and Blood of Christ is the great *medium* of conveyance of all blessings and mercies to the souls and bodies of Believers. It lies as

a vast pipe at the Fountain-head of blessings. receiving and conveying them from God to men, *Col. 1. 14. 19.*

So then, it being united to the second person, and so become the Flesh and Blood of God, it being the Sacrifice offered up to God for Atonement and Remission of sins, and the *medium* of conveying all grace and mercy from God, the Fountain, to the souls and bodies of Believers; how sweet a relish must it have upon the palate of faith? Here faith may taste the sweetness of a *Pardon*, a full, free, and final pardon of sin, than which nothing in this world can be sweeter to a sin-burdened conscience.

Here it tastes the incomparable sweetness of *Peace* with God, a peace which passeth understanding; the breach sin made, is by this Sacrifice made up for ever, *Col. 1. 20.*

Here it tastes the unexpressable sweetness of *acquaintance* with God, and an interest in his favour; a mercy which a poor convinced soul would give ten thousand worlds for, were it to be purchased. Yea, here it relisheth all the sweet *Promises* in the Covenant of grace, as confirmed and ratified by this Sacrifice, *Heb. 9. 5.* So that well might he say, My Flesh is meat indeed, and my Blood is drink indeed; the most excellent New-Testament food for Believers.

1. *Use of Information.* First: See here the love of a Saviour, that Heavenly *Pelican*, who feeds us with his own Flesh and Blood. You read *Lam. 4. 10.* of pitiful Women who eat the flesh of their

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own Children; but where have you read of Men or Women that gave their own flesh and blood for meat and drink to their Children? Think on this you that are so loth to cross and deny your flesh for Christ; he suffered his flesh to be rent, and his Blood set abroad for you; what love like the love of Christ?

Secondly: Learn hence a ground of Content in the lowest and poorest condition allotted to any Believer in this world. It may be some of you live low in the world, you have hard fare, and are abridg'd of many of those sweet comforts in the Creature, which the Enemies of God abound in; but still remember, you have no cause to envy their dainties, and be dissatisfied with your own lot and portion, when not many *Nobles* or mighty in the world feed as your souls do feed. O what a feast have you! What dainties do your souls tast by faith, whilst others do but feed upon Ashes and Husks! what is the flesh of *Lambs and Calves out of the stall* to the Flesh of Christ? Amos 6. 4, 5, 6. What is Wine in bowls, and the *chief Ointment* to the Blood of Christ, and the anointings of his Spirit? O be satisfied with your outward lot, however God hath cast it, whilst he hath dealt so bountifully with your souls.

Thirdly: Learn hence the necessity of faith, in order to the livelyhood and subsistence of our souls. What is a feast to him that cannot tast it? And what is Christ to him that cannot believe? That cannot by faith eat his Flesh and drink his Blood?

'Tis not the *Preparation* made for souls in Christ,
but

but the *Applicatton* of him by faith, that gives us the sweetness and benefit of him. Faith is the souls mouth or Palate? the Unbeliever tastes no sweetness in Christ, he can relish more sweetness in money, meat, drink, carnal mirth, or any sensual enjoyment than Christ.

Fourthly : How excellent are Gospel-Ordinances ? What sweetness is there to be found in them by true Believers ? For there Christ is prepar'd, and as it were serv'd in for them to feed upon. *It* is your ministers work to cook and prepare for you all the week long, and to furnish for you a feast of fat things. Loe, here's a Table spread and furnished this day with the costliest dainties that heaven affords. O prize these mercies, sit not here with flat or wanton appetites, lest God call to your Enemies, and bid them take away,

2. *Use of Exhortation.* Is the Flesh and Blood of Christ Meat and Drink indeed ? then let me exhort you Brethren,

First ; To come to this Table with sharp and hungry appetites, Have you ever tasted that the Lord is gracious ? and do you not hunger and thirst to taste it again ? Surely *where the carcass is, thither will the Eagles be gather'd*, Math. 24. 28. There is a two fold appetite, a *dainty*, and an *hungry* appetite ; beware of a nice and dainty appetite, that can relish nothing in the most solid and spiritual duties, except the dish be garnisht with flowers of Rhetorick, or the matter serv'd in with art and elegance : This hath been the great sin of the Professors of this Generation. O Christians, no more of that I pray you.

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you. Were you really an hungred and athirst for Christ, you would come to his Ordinances, as famishing men to a feast.

Secondly : To feed heartily upon Christ in every Ordinance, and in every Sacrament especially. O that your souls might hear and answer that invitation this day, *Cant. 5. 1. Eat, O Friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O Beloved.*

For Motives I will only hint these three following.

First : *Christ is the matter of this feast.* God hath prepar'd him for your souls. Is any thing in Heaven or Earth so sweet as Christ Sacrificed is ? Do not the *Angels* and *Saints* in Heaven feast upon him ? Surely one drop of Christ's Blood hath more sweetness and excellency in it than the whole Ocean of all Creature-comforts.

Secondly : *Don't your graces need it?* Have you not a languishing love, a staggering faith, dull and sluggish desires ? Look into your hearts, and see what need there is of strengthening the things that are in you, which are ready to die. O feed upon Christ, that your graces may be revived and strengthened.

Thirdly : *Do you know how many days you are to go in the strength of this meal?* How long it may be ere you sit again at the Lords Table ? Surely even these as well as your inferior temporal comforts stand upon terms of greatest uncertainty. Ah Christians ! Consider well the times you live in, the Enemy that stands ready to rake away the cloath, and remove your spiritual food from you. It's
said

said of *Peter Martyr*, that being in *Oxford* when *Q. Mary* came in, and hearing the first *Mass-bell* ring, he was struck to the heart, and said, *Hæc una notula omnem meam doctrinam evertit.* This one tinkling Bell overthrows all the labours of my Ministry at once.

God grant we may hear none of that Musick in *England* any more; but it's like to be according to your estimation and improvement of Christ's precious Ordinances.

Thirdly: Commend the experienced sweetness of Christ to others, Don't conceal his loveliness and excellency. Thus the fair and enamoured spouse charges or adjures others, *Cant. 5. 9.* Be not content to feast upon Christ alone, whilst other souls are starving, and perhaps the souls of your dear natural Relations. Say to them as *David*, *Psal. 34. 8.* O, taste and see how good the Lord is.

Fourthly and lastly: See that your appetite to Christ be right, and truly spiritual. Such an hunger and thirst, upon which blessedness is entailed by Promise; and you may conclude it so, when

First: It is a sharp and strong appetite, *Psalms 42. 1.* Let your thoughts run upon Christ night and day, like the desires of a longing Woman.

Secondly: When 'tis a Universal appetite, after every thing in Christ, his Holiness as well as his Righteousness, his Commands as well as his promises, for he is altogether lovely, *Cant. 5. 16.*

Thirdly: When 'tis a continual appetite; I mean not that the pulse of your desires should keep an even

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even stroke at all times, but that there be real and sincere workings of heart after him always, *Psal. 119. 20.*

Fourthly: When 'tis an *industrious appetite*, awakening the soul to the Use of all means and practice of all duties in order to satisfaction, *Psal. 27. 4. One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after.*

Fifthly and lastly: It's then aright, when 'tis an *insatiable appetite*, never to be allaid with any thing beside, Christ, *Psal. 73. 25.* No, nor with Christ himself, till thou comest to the full enjoyment of him in Heaven. The Believer knows, how sweet soever his Communion with Christ is in this world, yet that Communion he shall have with Christ in Heaven far excels it; there it will be more intimate and immediate, *1 Cor. 19. 12.* more full and perfect, even to satisfaction, *Psal. 17. 15.* more constant and continued, not suffering such interruptions as it doth here, *Rev. 21. 25.* More pure and unmixed. Here our Corruptions work with our Graces, *Rom. 7. 21.* but there grace shall work alone. In a word, more durable and perpetual: We shall be ever with the Lord, *1 Thes. 4. 7.* Long therefore to drink that new Wine in the Father's Kingdom: The Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; even so come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

The

The Eleventh Meditation.

U P O N

Canticles 8. 6. Set me as a Seal upon thy heart, as a Seal upon thine arm ; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave ; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.

THis Book is a sacred *Allegory*, the sense thereof is deep and spiritual. Our unacquaintance with such Schemes and figures of speech, together with the want of spiritual light and experience, makes it difficult to be understood ; but the *Allegory* being once unfolded by reason of its affinity with the fancy, truth is more easily and affectingly transmitted both to the mind and heart.

St. *Augustine* assigns this reason why we are so much delighted with *Metaphors* and *Allegories*, because they are so much proportioned to our senses, with which our reason hath contracted an intimacy and familiarity. And therefore God to accommodate his truth to our capacity, doth as it were embody it in earthly expressions, according to that of the ancient *Caballists*, *lumen supremum nunquam descendit sine indumento* ; Heavenly truth never descendeth to us without its vail and covering.

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The words before us are the request of the Spouse to Jesus Christ, and consist of two parts, viz.

1. Her suit, which is earnest.
2. Her Argument, which is weighty.

1. Her earnest suite or request to Jesus Christ, *Set me as a Seal upon thy Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm.* The *Heart* of Christ notes his most dear, inward, and tender affection; his *Arm* notes his protecting and preserving care and power: the last naturally follows the first; what men dearly affect, they tenderly and carefully protect. And by *setting her as a Seal upon his Heart and Arm*, she means a sure and a well-confirmed interest, both in his love and power; This she would have firmly sealed and ratified; and that this is her meaning, will plainly appear from

The Argument with which she enforces her request. *For love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave, &c.*

By *Jealousie*, we must understand her fears and suspicions of coming short of Christ and his love, q. d. What if after all I should be deceived? What if Jesus Christ do not love me with a special love? O these fears and suspicions are intolerable torments to her, she cannot bear them; they are cruel as the grave, insufferable as coals of fire, which have a most vehement flame. q. d. Lord, if thou leave me in the midst of these jealousies of thy love, I shall be but a torment to my self: I shall live as one upon the rack, or in the flames. Hence the note is,

Doct.

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Doct. *That there is nothing in this world which true Christians more earnestly desire, than to be well assured and satisfied of the love of Jesus Christ to their souls.*

In the meditation of this point, two things must be inquired into.

1. Why this assurance is so desirable.
2. How it may be obtained.

Why the assurance of the love of Christ is so desirable in the eyes of true Christians. And among others, there are two things that especially make it so, *viz.*

1. The sweetness of its enjoyment.
2. The difficulty of its attainment.

The Sweetness of its enjoyment, which is unexpressable and inconceivable; for it is a mercy above all estimation. It is,

1. The riches of faith.
2. The rest and ease of the heart.
3. The pleasure of life.
4. A Cordial in death.
5. A sweet support in all troubles.

1. It is the very *riches of faith*, the most pleasant fruit which grows upon the top branches of faith. The Scripture tells us of an assurance of Understanding, hope, and faith: All these graces are precious in themselves, but the assurance of each of them is the most sweet and pleasant part. Knowledge above knowledge is the full assurance of knowledge: Hope above hope, is the full assurance of hope: and faith above faith, is the full assurance of faith. The least and lowest act of saving faith is

precious, & above all value ; what then must the highest and most excellent acts of faith be ? Certainly, there is a sweetness in the assurance of faith, that few men have the priviledge to taste ; and they that do, can find no words able to express it to anothers Understanding. The weakest Christian is exalted above other men, but the assured Christian hath a preference before all other Christians.

2. it is *hearts ease*, the very Sabbath and sweet repose of the soul. Thousands of poor Christians would part with all they possess in this world, to enjoy it, but it flies from them. The life that most of them live, is a life betwixt hopes and fears ; their interest in Christ is very doubtful to them. Sometimes they are encouraged from sensible workings of grace, then all is dashed again, by the contrary stirrings and workings of their own corruptions. Now the Sun shines out clear, by and by the Heavens are over-cast and clouded again ; But the assured Christian is at rest from those tormenting fears and jealousies, which my Text speaks of, that are as cruel as the grave, and as insufferable as coals of fire in a mans bosom. He can take Christ into the arms of his faith, and say, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*. Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

3. It is the *pleasure of life* ; yea, the most rational, pure, and transporting pleasure. What is life without pleasure ? And what pleasure is there in the world comparable to this pleasure ? For let the sealed and assured Believer *consider*, and compare, and he must needs find a joy and pleasure beyond the

city to themselves, and fear of their own deceitfulness makes them think no hearts are like their hearts, especially, whilst they compare other mens outside with their own inside, as generally they do. O, how do our own corruptions every moment raise mists and clouds, that it is a wonder we ever should have one clear beam of assurance shining into such hearts as our hearts are.

(2.) The multitudes of mistakes and cheats that are frequently committed and found in this matter, makes upright hearts the more suspicious and doubtful of their own conditions. O, when they read *Matth. 7. 22.* that many will say to Christ in that day, *Lord, Lord, we have Prophesied in thy Name, &c.* It scares them lest they also be deceived.

(3.) The grand importance of the matter makes poor souls fearful of concluding certainly about it. O, when a man considers that the whole weight of his eternal happiness or misery depends upon the resolution of these Questions: Am I in Christ? or am I not? It will make him tremble to determine. In a word, assurance is not in our power, or at our command. There be many holy humble, diligent, and longing souls, to whom it is denied. It is arbitrarily dispensed by the pleasure of the spirit, to whom he will, and such favours are rare even among true believers, the more therefore it is to be valued and desired by all, as the Spouse doth in this place: And so much to the first thing; Upon what account the assurance of Christs love is so desirable in the eyes of Christians.

2. In the last place, let us consider how this

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mercy which is so desirable, may be obtained; and this is our proper work and business at this time.

You are now come to a sealing Ordinance, instituted on purpose for this noble End and Use. O, that we could pray and plead for it as the Spouse here doth! *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave, &c.* Now in order to the attainment of this most desirable mercy, take a few necessary hints of your present work and duty in the following directions.

1. *Direction.* Would you be well secured of Christ's love to you, and that you are set as a seal upon his heart? then exercise and manifest more love to Christ, and let him be much upon your hearts. If it be clear to you, that you have true love to Jesus Christ, you need not at all to doubt, but you are in his heart and in his love. *I love them that love me,* Prov. 8. 17. And surely you have now before you the greatest motive in the world, to inflame your love to Jesus Christ. Behold him as he is here represented to you, wounded for your iniquities, yea, sacrificed to the wrath of God for your Peace, Pardon, and Salvation. O, what manner of love is this? Behold how he loved thee! If Christ's love draw forth thine, it will so far clear thy interest in his love, as it shall engage thy heart in love to him.

2. *Direction.* But seeing the activity of your love will be according to the activity of your faith, therefore in the next place I advise you to make it the main work and business of this hour to exercise

your

the joy of the whole Earth. If he consider well what he is assured of, it is no common mercy, but Christ himself, and his love; a mercy incomprehensible by Men or Angels, *Eph. 3. 19.* Put Christ into the sensible possession of a Believer, and joy is no more under his command for that time; he can no more refuse to rejoyce, than he that is tickled can forbear to laugh; and especially when his thoughts are exercised in *comparing* states and conditions, either his own with other mens, or his own now with what it was, and what it shall be. To think with thy self thus, I am assured of Christ and his love, my interest in him is sealed; but this is a mercy few enjoy besides me. There be millions of souls of equal value with mine by nature, that shall never enjoy such a mercy as this. Yea, the time was when I my self was far from it, in my unregenerate estate. Lord, how is it I had not then been sealed to Damnation? O, 'tis well with me for present, that I can call Christ my own; and yet it will be better and better. My condition will mend every day. I am now *in Christ*, and it is but a little while before I shall be *with Christ*, and arrive at the full satisfaction of my very heart. O, what pleasure doth every glance backward or forward give to the sealed soul!

4. It is a *Cordial in death*, and there is none like it. This will make the soul triumph over the grave, rake death chearfully by the cold hand, welcome its grim Messengers, and long to be gone, and be with Christ. Dark and doubting Christians may indeed shrink back from it, and be afraid of the exchange; but the assured soul longs to be gone,

and needs patience to live, as other men do to die. When one was asked if he were willing to die, his answer was, *Illius est nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Christum*. Let him be loth to die, that is loth to go to Christ. The Sugar of assurance sweetens the bitter cup of death, and makes it delectable to a Believers relish.

5. In a word, it is a *sweet support in all the troubles and afflictions on this side the grave*. Let the assured soul be cast into what condition the Lord pleases, be it upon a bed of sickness; yet this gives his soul such support and comfort, that he shall not say, I am sick; sin being forgiven, the soul is well, when the body is in pain, *Isa. 33. 24*. Let him be cast into a prison, here's that will turn a prison into a Paradise, *Act. 5. 41*. Let him be pincht with any outward want, this will supply all, *As having nothing, and yet possessing all things, 2. Cor. 6. 10*. thus you see how desirable it is for its own excellency.

2. And as it is desirable for the sweetness of its own enjoyment, so also from the *difficulty of its attainment*; all excellencies are lockt up under many difficulties; but none like this; it is indeed easie to presume an interest in Christ, and cheat a mans own soul with a dream and fancy of our own Creation; but sure it's hard to get a sealed clear title to Christ and his benefits; and there be among others three things that make it difficult.

(1.) The corruptions that remain, and daily work in the best hearts, these are evermore puzzling and scaring the poor soul with fears and doubts about its condition. Grace teacheth men due severity

your faith upon Jesus Christ; set your selves this day to believe; the more strong the direct acts of your faith shall be, the more clear and comfortable its reflex acts are like to be. There are three distinct offices or employments for your faith at this Table, viz. 1. To realize. 2. To apply. 3. To infer from the sufferings of Jesus Christ

(1.) Realize the sufferings of Christ for you, and behold them here represented in a true glass to the eye of faith: See you that Bread broken, and that Wine poured out? As sure as this is so, Jesus Christ endured the Cross, suffered the Wrath of the great and terrible God in his Soul, and in his Body upon the cursed Tree, for and in the room of poor Condemned Sinners. Your faith for the one hath as much, yea, more certainty, than your sense hath for the other. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save Sinners, 1 Tim. 1. 15. and without controversie, great is the mystery of Godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, &c, 1 Tim. 3. 16.*

2. Apply the sufferings of Christ this day to thine own soul. Believe all this to be done & suffered in thy room, and for thy sake: He offered not this Sacrifice for his own sins, but ours, *Isa. 53. 9. Heb. 7. 27. He was Incarnate for you, Isa. 9. 6. For us a Child is born; to us a Son is given. His death was for you, and in your stead, Gal. 3. 13. He was made a curse for us; and when he rose from the dead he rose for our justification, Rom. 4. 25. and now he is in glory at the right hand of God, he is there for us, Heb. 7. 25. He ever lives to make Intercession for us:*

It

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It was the pride, passion, earthliness, and unbelief of thy heart which Jesus Christ groaned, bled, and died to procure a pardon for.

3. Infer from the sufferings of Christ those conclusions of faith that tend to assurance. As thus, Did Christ die for me when I was an Enemy? then surely being reconciled, I shall be saved by his life, *Rom. 5. 10.* Again, Is Christ dead for me? then I shall never die eternally: Nothing shall separate me from the love of God, it is Christ that died, *Rom. 8. 34.*

3. *Direction* Mourn over all those sins that cause the Lord to hide his Face from your souls. Have you grieved the Spirit by your sin? O, be grieved for it this day at your very hearts; cover the Table of the Lord with tears, Look upon him whom you have pierced, and mourn as for an only Son. Though there be no *merit*, yet there is much *mercy* in a broken heart for sin; and there is no such advantage to get your hearts broken as this is which is now before you. When the shower of Repentance is fallen, the Heavens over thee may be clear, and the Sun shine out in its brightness upon thy soul.

4. *Direction* In a word, pour out thy soul to God in hearty desires for a sealed and clear interest in his love this day; tell him it is a mercy thou valuest above life, *Thy favour is better than life, Psal. 63. 3.* Tell him, thou art not able to live with the jealousies and suspicions of his love; thou art but a torment to thy self, whilst thy interest in his love abides under a cloud. Beseech him to pity thy
poor

poor afflicted soul, which hath lain down and risen so long with these fears and tremblings, and been a stranger to comfort for so many days. Tell him how weak thy hands have been, and still are in duties of obedience, for want of this strength and encouragement. Engage thy soul to him this day to be more active, chearful, and fruitful in his service, if it will please him now to free thee from those fears and doubts that have clogg'd thee in all thy former duties. O, cry unto him in the words, and with the deep sense of the Spouse in this Text. Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave, the coals thereof are coals of fire, &c.

The Twelfth Meditation.

U P O N

Eph. 3. 19. — *And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.*

THE knowledge of Christ, and of his love, is deservedly in this place set down among the *desiderata Christianorum*, the most desirable enjoyments of Believers in this world. This love of Christ had centred the Apostles heart, he was swallowed up in the meditation and admiration of it, and would have all hearts inflamed and affected with it, as his was.

Some

Some think the Apostle speaks *Extatically* in this place, and knows not how to make the parts of his discourse consistent with each other, when he puts them upon endeavours to know that love of Christ, which himself confesses to pass knowledge.

But though his heart was ravished with the love of Christ, yet there is no contradiction or inconsistency in his discourse. He doth earnestly desire for the *Ephesians*, that they may know the love of Christ, *i. e.* that they might experimentally know his love, which passeth knowledge; that is, as some expound it, all other kinds of knowledge; yea, and all knowledge of Christ which is not practical and experimental.

Or thus, Labour to get the clearest and fullest *apprehensive* knowledge of Christ and his love, that is attainable in this world, though you cannot arrive to a perfect *comprehensive* knowledge of either. *Mens humana hoc & capit, & non capit; atque in eo capit, quod rapitur in admirationem*, as others reconcile it. The note from it is,

Doct. *That the love of Christ surpasses and transcends the knowledge of the most illuminated Believers.*

The love of Christ is too deep for any created understanding to fathom, 'tis unsearchable love, and it is so in divers respects.

1. It is unsearchable in respect of its *antiquity*. No Understanding of man can trace it back to its first spring, it flows from one eternity to another: We receive the fruits and effects of it now; but O, how ancient is that root that bears them! He loved us before this world was made, and will continue so to do, when it shall be reduced into ashes, It is said,

Prov.

Prov. 8. 30, 31. When he gave the Sea his decree, when he appointed the foundations of the Earth, then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoycing always before him, rejoycing in the habitable parts of his Earth, and my delights were with the Sons of men.

2. The freeness of the love of Christ passes knowledge. No man knows, nor can any words express how free the love of Christ to his people is: It is said *Isa. 55. 8. My thoughts are not your thoughts.* The meaning is, My Grace, Mercy, and Love to you is one thing, as it is in my thoughts, and quite another thing when it comes into your thoughts. In my thoughts it is like it self, free, rich, and unchangeable; but in your thoughts it is limited and narrowed, pincht in within your streight and narrow conceptions, that it is not like it self, but altered according to the model and platform of Creatures, according to which, you draw it in your minds. Alas, we do but alter and spoil his love, when we think there is any thing in us, or done by us, that can be a motive, inducement, or recompence to it. His love is so free, that it pitched it self upon us, before we had any loveliness in us at all. *When we were in our blood, he said unto us, Live; and that was the time of love,* it did not stay till we had our Ornaments upon us, but embraced us in our blood, in our most loathsome state; and of all seasons, that is the season of love, the chosen time of love, *Ezek. 16. 7, 8.* Christ loved us not upon the account of any fore-seen excellency in us, or upon any expectation of recompence from us: Nay, he loved

us not only without, but against our deserts. Nothing in nature is found so free as the love of Christ is; our thoughts therefore of this love going beyond all examples and instances that are found among men, quickly lose themselves in an immense Ocean of free grace, where they can find neither bank nor bottom.

The *bounty* and *liberality* of the love of Christ to his people, passeth knowledge. Who can number or value the fruits of his love? They are more than the Sands upon the Sea-shore. It would weary the arm of an *Angel* to write down the thousandth part of the effects of his love, which come to the share of any particular Christian in this world. Who can tell how many sins it pardons? *The free gift is of many offences unto justification*, Rom. 5. 16. How many dangers it prevents, or how many wants it supplies? This we know, that of his fulness, we all receive grace for grace, *Joh. 1. 16*. But how full of grace Christ is, and how many mercies have, and shall flow to us out of that Fountain of love, this is unknown to men, to the best, wisest, and most observant men. O! if the records of the mercies of our lives were or could be gathered and kept, what vast volumes would they swell to? 'Tis true indeed, you have the total sum given you in 1 Cor. 3. 22. *All are yours*, but it is such a number as no man can number.

The *Constancy* of Christ's love to his People passeth knowledge: No length of time, no distance of place, no change of condition, either with him or us, can possibly make any alteration of his affec-

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ons towards us. He is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, *Heb. 13. 8.* It is noted also by the *Evangelist, Joh. 13. 1.* *That having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.* 'Tis true, his condition is altered, he is no more in this world conversing with his People, as he did once in the days of his Flesh: He is now at the right hand of God, in the highest glory; but yet his heart is the same that ever it was, for love and tenderness to his People. Our conditions also are often altered in this world, but his love suffers no alteration. Yea, which is much more admirable, we do many things daily that grieve him, and offend him, yet he takes not away his loving kindness from us, nor suffers his faithfulness to fail. We pour out so much cold water of unkindness and provocation as is enough to cool and quench any love in the world, except His love; but notwithstanding all, he continues unchangeable in love to us. This *Peter* found, notwithstanding that great offence of his: No sooner was the Lord risen from the dead, but he greets him in the style of his former love and ancient respect, *Go tell the Disciples, and tell Peter.*

So then, the love of Christ is a love transcending all Creature-love, and humane Understanding. We read in *Rom. 5. 7, 8.* *That peradventure, for a good man, some would even dare to die:* But we never find where any beside Jesus Christ would lay down his life for Enemies. It is recorded as an unparallel'd instance of love in *Damon and Pithias*, the two *Sicilian Philosophers*, that each had courage enough to die

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for his friend ; for one of them being condemned to die by the *Tyrant*, and desiring to give the last farewell to his Family, his Friend went into prison for him, as his Surety to die for him, if he returned not at the appointed time ; but he did not die ; yea, he had such a confidence in his friend, that he would not suffer him by default to die for him ; and if he had, yet he had died for his Friend : But such was the love of Christ, that it did not only put him under danger of death, but put him actually unto death ; yea, the worst of deaths, and that for his Enemies. O what manner of love is this ! We read of the love that *Jacob* had for *Rachel*, and how he endured both the cold of Winter, and heat of Summer for her sake : But what is this to the love of Jesus, who for us endured the heat of God's Wrath ? Beside, she was beautiful, but we unlovely. *David* wish'd for *Abolom* his Son, *Would God I had died for thee.* But it was but a wish, and had it come to the proof, *David* would have shrinkt from death, for all the affection he bare his beautiful Son. But Christ actually gave his life for us, and did not only wish he had done it. O love transcending the love of Creatures ; yea, and surmounting all Creature-knowledge. *The Uses follow.*

I. *Use.* If the love of Christ pass knowledge, O ! then admire it ; yea, live and die in the wonder and admiration of the love of Christ. As it is a sign of great weakness to admire small and common things, so it speaks great stupidity not to be affected with great and unusual things. O Christian,

an, if thou be one that conversest with the thoughts of this love, thou canst not but admire it; and the more thou studiest, the more still wilt thou be astonished at it. And among the many Wonders that will appear in the love of Christ, these two will most of all affect thee, *viz.*

1. That ever it pitcht at first on thee.
2. That it is not by so many sins quencht towards thee.

(1.) 'Tis admirable that ever the love of Christ pitcht at first upon thee; for are there not millions in the world of sweeter tempers, and better constitutions than thy self, whom it hath past by, and yet imbraced thee? *Lord* (said the Disciples) *how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self unto us, and not unto the world?* Joh. 14. 22. Surely he did not set his love upon thee, nor chuse thee, because thou wast better than others, but because he loved thee.

(2.) It is admirable that his love to thee is not extinguished by so many sins as thou hast committed against him. Lay thy hand, Christian, this day, upon thy heart, and be-think thy self how many have been the provocations, wrongs, and dishonours thou hast been guilty of against thy God, and that since he called thee by his grace, and set his love upon thee: What, and yet love the still! Yea, notwithstanding all, he is still thy God, and loves thee with an unchangeable love. O! with how many notwithstandings is his love continued to thy soul? All this is just matter of admiration and wonder for ever.

Is the love of Christ past knowledge? an un-

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searchable love? then learn whence and why it is that the souls of Believers never are, nor can be tired in beholding and enjoying Jesus Christ. We use to say, one thing is tiresome; and it is very true, if it be an earthly thing, it will be so, how sweet or excellent soever it seems at first; and the reason is, because the best Creature-enjoyment is but a shallow thing, and a few thoughts will sound it to the bottom; and there being no supply of new matter to feed the hungry soul upon, it is quickly fated and cloyed with the repetition of the same thing over and over, but it is far otherwise in Christ; for though he be but one, yet in that one thing all things are virtually and eminently contained, so that every day he seems a new Christ for sweetness, and yet is the same Christ still. And in Heaven the Redeemed shall view him with as much wonder, and love him with as much ardour after millions of years, as they did at their first sight of him. O! there is no bottom in the love of Christ; it passeth knowledge.

3. In a word, bestow your best and chiefest love upon Christ, whose love to you passeth all knowledge. Let no creature be loved equally with Christ, but as his love to you passeth all Creature-love, so let yours to him be a matchless love.

Believer, Christ loves thee with an unsearchable love, he loves thee more than the dearest friend, that is, as thine own soul loves thee. He loves thee more than thou lovest thy Child, or the Wife of thy bosom; more than thy soul loves thy body, with which it is so intimately united:

united : And wilt thou content thy self with such poor, narrow, remiss affections to Jesus Christ. O look upon him this day in his red Garments, behold him in the strength of his love breaking through the Curse of the Law, the Wrath of God, the Agonies of Death, to bring home the fruits of his eternal love to thy soul. And whilst thou art beholding and musing upon it, let thy heart melt, thy eyes drop, and thy very soul cry out,

Behold how he loved me !

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

A Hymn

UPON

Rom. 5. v. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Verse.

6. **V**hen we were destitute of strength,
our selves to help or save,
Christ for ungodliness at length,
his Life a Ransom gave.

7. For one that's Righteous, we would grutch
to lay our life to stake,

And for a good man, it were much,
such an exchange to make.

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8. But God his matchless love commends,
in that Christ Jesus dies

For us, when we were not his friends,
but wretched Enemies.

9. Much more being justified and free,
through his own blood from sin,

From wrath to come we sav'd shall be,
even by the life of him.

10. For if when Enemies for us,
Christs death did end the strife:

Much more when reconciled thus,
He'll save us by his life.

11. Yea, more than so, we triumph now
in God with one Accord,

Having receiv'd Atonement through
Christ Jesus our own Lord.

Wherefore to him, who is the first
begotten of the dead,

Who over earthly Princes must,
be supream Lord and Head:

Even to him who lov'd us so,
to wash us in his blood,

And make us Kings, and Priests unto
his Father, and his God:

To him Dominion therefore,
by us be given, when

This present world shall be no more:
To which, we say, Amen.

FINIS.

